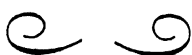


NUPTIALS WITHOUT LOVE

FOR
ALDO DE DOMINICIS
IN GRATITUDE

NUPTIALS WITHOUT LOVE

THE LIFE OF PRINCESS CLOTILDE
OF SAVOY (1843-1911)



Estelle Casalandra

"I know that from these nuptials a good can come to my country. Since love of country commands it and you desire it, I accept."

*Words of Princess Clotilde to her father,
King Victor Emmanuel II, on January 18, 1859*

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P R E F A C E

In 1961 occurred the centenary of the unification of Italy. The year-long celebrations were centered in Turin because Turin and not Rome was the capital during the years of struggle for Italian unification. Rome became the capital only when King Victor Emmanuel II ordered his army to march in and take the city from Pope Pius IX in 1870.

By an ironic coincidence, 1961 marked also the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Princess Clotilde of Savoy, the daughter of King Victor Emmanuel II. Princess Clotilde strenuously opposed the confiscation of the Papal States by the Italian government, a confiscation which precipitated the so-called Roman Question and which plagued both the Italian State and the Roman Catholic Church for almost sixty years. It was not until 1929, when the Lateran Treaty was signed, that the question was resolved.

During the many activities of the 1961 centennial the name of Princess Clotilde of Savoy was often mentioned in relation to *Il Risorgimento*, the movement for political unity in Italy, and rightly so, for her marriage to Prince Napoleon, cousin of Emperor Napoleon III of France, was part of the political pact that enabled her father to achieve a united Italy and to become its first king. But while the Italian State was celebrating the memory of Princess Clotilde for her sacrificial role in the cause of Italian unification, the Church was remembering and honoring her

for an entirely different reason. Pope Pius XII in 1942 signed the introduction for the cause of her beatification, and the fame of her holiness has been spreading throughout Italy and beyond. In northern Italy, Princess Clotilde is known as "the Saint of Moncalieri." In central Italy, at Rome, the headquarters for information relative to her cause is Santa Sabina on the Aventine Hill, the Generalate of the Dominican Order. And she is loved and venerated as far south as Pompeii. She is even depicted among the Dominican saints surrounding our Lady of the Rosary in the frescoed cupola of the basilica of Pompeii.

Although there have been at least six Italian biographies of Princess Clotilde of Savoy—and Padre Fanfani's has been translated into French, Spanish, German, and Dutch—this is the first English biography of her.

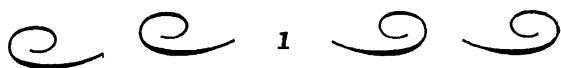
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THREE MEETINGS

The Emperor of France pushed back the memorandums lying before him, fixed for a moment his pale, heavy-lidded eyes on the conferee on the other side of his desk, then rose as if to say that four hours of sitting was enough for anyone, especially for one who was in frequent pain from a kidney ailment.

Napoleon III was a slight man, with a hooked nose that seemed too heavy for a face that could not disguise its weariness under the brown goatee and the waxed mustache which stuck out almost horizontally to left and right of the pallid cheeks. When he spoke, his voice too was slight, almost sweet, but there was something in its tone which commanded attention and respect.

"My dear Count, this then is the substance of our plans and conditions which you will report to His Majesty, the King of Sardinia. I am as anxious as he is to drive out all foreigners from Italy; but for the present, largely out of consideration for the Czar, we must suffer the Bourbons to remain in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and we must allow Pope Pius IX to keep part of the Papal States. This is to say, we shall take Romagna and Umbria but leave him

Rome and the Patrimony of Saint Peter. As for the Habsburgs, they must go not only from Lombardy and Venetia but also from Parma, Modena, and Tuscany. The Austrians are becoming too arrogant for French stomachs, albeit my immediate objective is not French comfort but Italian independence. The Italian Peninsula might well be divided into four states: Piedmont, to which will be added Lombardy, Venetia, Parma, and Romagna; a new kingdom of central Italy, formed from Tuscany and Umbria; the reduced Papal State; and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. To recompense the Pope for his losses, we could give him the title of President of the Italian Confederacy. Now, France will help the King of Sardinia on two conditions; namely, that the war with Austria have a pretext which will justify it before world opinion, particularly before England and Russia, and that Piedmont cede to France the Duchy of Savoy and—"

The French Emperor stopped abruptly and looked at the stocky, whiskered, and spectacled man who was standing humbly before him—the Prime Minister of King Victor Emmanuel II was not a man to remain seated in the presence of his betters. Count Camillo Benso di Cavour was an astute politician-statesman—the Machiavelli of the nineteenth century—and he knew that some sovereigns are more likely to be magnanimous when their inferiors assume a posture of obsequiousness.

The Count nodded his head as he rubbed his hands briskly several times, a characteristic action when he felt that a project was progressing even better than he had hoped, or in moments of dilemma when the rubbing of his hands became a sort of ritual to quicken his thoughts.

"Yes, Your Imperial Highness," he said somewhat apologetically, "I am sure that the King of Sardinia would be

willing to make the sacrifice of Savoy. I say *sacrifice* designedly because Savoy was the cradle of the House of Savoy, of which the King of Sardinia will become the most illustrious member."

Napoleon III pretended he had not heard the parenthetical remark, for he continued without comment: "Besides Savoy, France might want the seaport of Nice."

Although Count Cavour was not so sure about Victor Emmanuel's willingness to give Nice to France, he knew this was no time to say so. "Sire, Nice is Italian. If we cede it, what is to become of the principle of nationalities?"

The Emperor retorted quickly, "That is a secondary question which can be settled later on."

The Count nodded, almost as if apologizing for having made the objection, and then said, "Sire, I will report faithfully everything to the King of Sardinia, who is ready to make any sacrifice for the good of Italy."

Napoleon III looked as though the Count's remark about "any sacrifice" gave him an opening for something else he wanted to say, but he hesitated and for a moment said nothing as he casually brought his right hand to touch the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor on the lapel of his gray redingote.

When he did speak again, his voice was as casual as his gesture of dismissal. "Well, my dear Count, suppose we take an hour out, then meet anew at four o'clock, for a ride through the mountains. Meanwhile, our meeting here at Plombières on this twenty-first day of July, 1858, must be kept secret. Not even the Empress knows that you are here with me. She has no use for anything or anyone Italian. If there is anyone she dislikes more, it is my beloved cousin Prince Napoleon. But, as you know, if there is anything in the world that Prince Napoleon loves, it is Italy;

and nothing is dearer to his liberal heart than to see Italians united under the King of Sardinia. Come, my dear Count, let us go."

Count Cavour rubbed his hands again as he followed the Emperor like a puppy sensing that his master is about to give him a meaty bone.

At the door of this secret alcove in the imperial lodge, the Emperor took his leave of the Count, who returned hurriedly to his room in the home of a nearby pharmacist. The Count had not been disconcerted when he had been told the night before that there was not a single empty room in any of the inns, Plombières being filled to overflowing with travelers who had come to this fashionable resort with its radioactive springs in the hope of being cured of all manner of ills. In fact, he had been relieved. He could better maintain his incognito. He had traveled somewhat uneasily all the way from Turin in Piedmont to Plombières in France under the name of Giuseppe Benso and with a forged passport. If not a single soul in Paris knew of his meeting with the Emperor, there were only two in Turin who knew—the King of Sardinia and his Minister of War.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, Count Cavour stood at attention as Emperor Napoleon III came out of the imperial lodge and headed for the phaeton a few feet away. When he saw the Emperor sit down in the driver's seat, he hastened to mount the four-wheeled open carriage and take the seat beside him.

Napoleon III was in an affable mood as he held the reins and the horses trotted through the forest and valleys of the Vosges mountains. After a moment or two of silence he said, "I got a telegram from Count Walewski, my very alert Minister of War, saying that you were somewhere in Plombières. I didn't want him to know, for like the Em-

press he opposes our cause; but at least his knowing indicates that my police force works well!"

They had scarcely left the limits of the town when the Emperor turned to the Count again and asked, "And what does His Majesty, the King of Sardinia, think of a marriage between his daughter and Prince Napoleon?"

The Count knew very well what the King of Sardinia thought of such a marriage. It was not the first time such a question had been asked. In late 1856, Prince Napoleon's secretary, Alexandre Bixio, had asked the same question, and the answer had been that the House of Savoy would hardly be inclined to accept Prince Napoleon as a suitable husband for their princess.

Before leaving Turin for Plombières, Cavour had been instructed by Victor Emmanuel on the subject: it was number nine on the points he had jotted down in cipher at the King's dictation—"Marriage of P. C. with Pr. N." Because of the King's anxiety on this point, Cavour had telegraphed the King immediately after his first meeting with the Emperor. The telegram read, "He has not yet broached n. 9."

Cavour avoided a pointed answer to the Emperor's question by remarking that he was sure the King had no unassailable objection but that the King would first want to know what importance His Imperial Highness attached to the marriage. Then speaking as though the objections were more his own than those of Victor Emmanuel, he continued: "But Princess Clotilde is still very young for marriage. She is barely fifteen. More important, there is an abysmal incompatibility between her and Prince Napoleon. She is profoundly religious, totally unworldly, while he is—"

The Emperor interrupted with a laugh. "Oh, I know what they say. He is a Voltairean in his ideas, an Epicurean

in his living. He has had his amours; he is impetuous, radical, impious. But really Prince Napoleon is better than what people say of him."

"But if I may not appear disrespectful," interposed Cavour, "the King of Sardinia remembers what the Emperor of France himself said three years ago, when the Prince sought in marriage the Duchess of Genoa."

"Oh, yes, I remember very well my criticism of the Prince's conduct when he committed the blunder of asking the Duchess to marry him while she was still in mourning for her husband's death, a blunder all the more indelicate since the Duke was the brother of the King of Sardinia. And I might add that there were other occasions when I complained to the King of Sardinia of the Prince's irresponsible conduct. But in spite of all this, I love my cousin the Prince tenderly because he has many excellent qualities of mind and heart. Yes, he is a man of heart, a man capable of great tenderness and loyalty. A man without heart would never have left Paris in the midst of the carnival season to visit the dying actress Rachel at Cannes. Why did he go? After all, they had been separated for four years. He went simply because she had sent for him. A sense of loyalty always binds him to those whom he loves or whom he has loved."

When Cavour began to open his mouth as if he had another objection, the Emperor waved his right hand and continued: "As for the disparity in their ages, a man of thirty-six is not exactly old. Moreover, in royal marriages the question of age is not important. I desire nothing more than to see the House of Bonaparte allied to the House of Savoy through marriage. No, I won't make the marriage a *sine qua non* of our political alliance, but I do desire it with all my heart."

When the carriage returned to the imperial lodge, it was

early dusk. Both men felt that the seven hours of conference had been profitable. In taking leave of each other, the Emperor grasped firmly the hand of his guest as he said softly, "Have confidence in me as I have confidence in you."

When he was alone in his room at the pharmacist's, Cavour rubbed his hands briskly before he sat down to make some notes of his first meeting with the Emperor and to formulate some of the arguments he would use in presenting to King Victor Emmanuel the proposition of the second meeting. Cavour knew that it was on the matrimonial proposition he would have to be eloquent. He was pleased at the way in which the rhetorical questions and balanced phrases flowed from his pen as he wrote:

The Emperor has not made the marriage of Princess Clotilde with his cousin a *sine qua non* but he has clearly manifested that he very much desires it. What will happen if the marriage does not take place—if Your Majesty refuses, without any plausible reasons, the proposals of the Emperor?

Will the alliance be broken? Perhaps, but I do not think so. The alliance will be made but the Emperor will bring to it an entirely different attitude from that which he would have brought to it if in exchange for the crown of Italy, which he offers to Your Majesty, you would have accorded him the hand of your daughter for his nearest relative.

If there is one quality which distinguishes the Emperor, it is his constancy in his friendships and in his antipathies. He never forgets a service as he never pardons an offense. Certainly a refusal in this instance would be for him a most cruel offense. The refusal would also have another unfortunate result. It would give you in the Council of the Emperor an implacable enemy. Prince Napoleon, more Corsican than even his cousin, would vow mortal hatred against us; and the

position which he occupies as well as that to which he can aspire, to say nothing of the affection—I would almost say the weakness—which the Emperor has for him, would give him numerous ways of satisfying it.

I do not hesitate to declare with the most profound conviction that to accept the alliance and to refuse the marriage would be an immeasurable political error which could bring great ill fortune to Your Majesty and to our country.

The next day Cavour left Plombières for a vacation in Switzerland. As soon as he finished his report he would dispatch it by personal messenger, but he would stay away from Turin long enough for the King to chew on the morsel of hard bread regarding Princess Clotilde. . . .

But while Cavour was riding relaxedly in a first-class compartment of the train from Plombières to Baden, Victor Emmanuel II was pacing up and down in the Hall of the Blessed in the Royal Palace at Turin.

The King of Sardinia was a man of unbounded energy and initiative, and he always gave the impression of being in a saddle, ready to take off on a hunt or a battle. When he was waiting for anything or anyone he usually paced up and down. And thus it was that he was pacing while he waited for his daughter Clotilde. Tomorrow she and her brothers and sister would be going to Casotto for their annual vacation, and he had decided that it would be better to prepare her beforehand. She would have time to think it over in the Carthusian-like environment of the Castle of Casotto. . . .

When he heard the knock on his door, he said as matter-of-factly as he could, "Come in."

"Camilla said you wanted to see me, Papà."

"Yes, yes, Kekina, I want to talk with you."

Kekina. Princess Clotilde was a little taken back. Of late

the King had not used the pet name of her childhood in speaking of or to her. But then of late she had seen very little of him except at the Sunday dinners when the King of Sardinia became for an hour the loving father who questioned his five children on the sermon they had heard at the ten o'clock Mass, which they always attended from the royal tribune in the *duomo*.

"Kekina, let us sit together here," he said warmly, as he led her with his right arm around her shoulders to a gilt and red settee.

The King kept fingering the ends of his brown goatee and handle-bar mustache as he spoke at length to the Princess, explaining the reasons why her marriage to Prince Jerome Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul, cousin of Emperor Napoleon III, was something desirable, almost necessary, to the future welfare of Italy; and he hinted at the harm which might result from a refusal. The rhetorical questions and balanced phrases flowed easily, almost as if his Prime Minister's ideas were being communicated to him by some form of telepathy, for the King had not yet received Cavour's many-paged letter.

But when he had finished speaking as king, Victor Emmanuel became the father who saw in the innocent girl with the golden brown hair and the large clear eyes his most beloved daughter, whom he could never bring himself to sacrifice on the altar of political expediency. Then his voice became affectionate, almost tender, as he brought the fingers of his right hand to wipe away the two large tears that were beginning to run down Clotilde's magnolia-white face.

"But, Kekina, I leave you free to refuse, perfectly free, I want you to understand. I only want you to think the matter over and then make your decision. You are to listen to no urgings from anyone. I won't have anyone meddling with

your decision. I could not bear to live with the memory of your dead mother if I did not leave you free in so grave a decision."

He saw the full lower lip of his daughter tremble—she had the Habsburg mouth, like that of the dead Queen. But he thanked God that his daughter had the Savoy discipline and fortitude, which would keep her from bursting into tears.

She was the first to recover the royal aplomb.

"Will this marriage be really for the good of my country?" she asked.

"Yes," came the answer.

"Do you wish it, Papà?"

"Yes."

"But I have never seen him. Will I be able to meet him before I decide?"

"Yes."

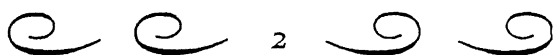
Before she could ask any more questions, King Victor Emmanuel had risen and made a pretense of being in a hurry, as if late for some appointment. "Kekina, I must be on my way, for I am going chamois hunting. I shall be home very late tonight and you will be leaving at dawn tomorrow, so I won't see you again for a while. But I plan to come to Casotto in several weeks."

Late that night two candlelit rooms in the Royal Palace indicated that their occupants had not yet retired. King Victor Emmanuel sat at his desk with a photograph of the late Queen Marie Adelaide in his hands. He had exhausted himself in the day's hunt, hoping thereby to be able to sleep in the black hours when troublesome feelings and thoughts sometimes arose like demons out of hell. "I know, Adele, sometimes I was not faithful to my love for you and now I am tempted to be unfaithful to my love for our

daughter," he said half aloud, as though his wife needed the articulated words before she would be permitted to know his thoughts in the world of the departed.

In her bedroom Princess Clotilde of Savoy, clad in her sleeping gown, was at her own desk. When she could not fall asleep she arose and began to reread the pages of the diary she had been keeping since the first of January of that year. Some of the entries she merely glanced at; others she reread slowly, as if she wanted to remember more vividly the events whose anniversaries she had noted down—the anniversary of her First Holy Communion and Confirmation, the anniversary of her mother's death, of her grandmother's. . . .

A photograph in the hands of a king and a diary in the hands of a princess kept two troubled minds and hearts from sleeping that night, and the threads of their memories might well have woven the fabric of the first fifteen years of the life of Princess Clotilde Maria Teresa Luisa of Savoy. . . .



FROM THE BEGINNING

Victor Emmanuel II, then Duke of Savoy, was pacing one of the salons of the ducal apartments in the seventeenth-century Royal Palace at Turin at one o'clock in the morning of March 2, 1843. An expert huntsman and a soldier who was to prove himself a hero on the battlefield, he could not bear to watch a woman in labor, especially since the woman happened to be his wife, the Archduchess Marie Adelaide of Austria. The child was to be their first and the Duke hoped it would be a boy; but as he listened to his wife's moaning through the opened door of the adjacent room, his concern was not for the infant but for the mother.

When the court physician emerged a half-hour later to inform Victor Emmanuel that he was the father of an infant daughter, he rushed to his wife's bedside while the Count de Castagnet hurried downstairs to post the official notice on the outside of the iron fence fronting the palace so as to satisfy the curiosity of the crowd who had been waiting in the chilly Piazza Castello.

The Duke knew his saintly wife's wishes regarding the baptism of their firstborn—that their child become a child of grace as soon as possible. At eleven-thirty that morning, ten hours after her birth, the infant Clotilde Maria Teresa

Luisa of Savoy was baptized by the Archbishop of Turin in an improvised chapel in the Duchess's apartment. The godfather and the godmother were the infant's grandparents, King Charles Albert and Queen Maria Teresa, then reigning in the Kingdom of Sardinia. Since 1720 the head of the House of Savoy had been officially entitled "King of Sardinia," but his kingdom (with its capital at Turin) consisted not only of the Island of Sardinia but, more important, of Piedmont and Savoy in northwestern Italy.

Many a biographer would like to say that as a child the subject of his biography was precocious. Was the child Clotilde or Kekina, as she was soon affectionately nicknamed by her mother, precocious?

A two-year-old child who was so conscious of her royalty that she instinctively put out her hand to be kissed, and who made a novena to the *Madonna Bambina* for the feast of September 8, was no ordinary child. Writing to an intimate friend on September 25, 1845, Queen Maria Teresa gave a detailed description of this first novena of her grandchild:

I have not yet written to you that my dear little Clotilde has made her first novena to the *Madonna Bambina*, as she herself says, reciting every day an Ave Maria and placing a blue or white flower before the image which, on the first day of the novena for the Nativity of the Virgin, I had put on my *prie-dieu* in the library at Racconigi, suggesting that she pick a blue or white flower in the park every day.

On one of the first days of the novena it was raining and Clotilde was unable to go outdoors, but all day long she spoke of nothing but her flower. Adele [Duchess Marie Adelaide], to whom I had not mentioned anything of all this, not understanding why the little

one wanted a flower, finally gave her a small branch of tiny artificial flowers. Seeing that Clotilde did not come to me, I went to her room and found her in the act of changing her dress. When I asked her about the flower, she showed me the flowers her mother had given her. If you could have seen that dear little girl going every day—and even when no one reminded her—to place her flower, join her tiny hands, and say Ave Maria, and then kiss the image of the Child Mary with so much grace, I think your eyes would have been filled with tears of tenderness as mine were. . . .

A seven-year-old child who received as a birthday gift from her mother a book entitled *La Journée du Chrétien* and inscribed *A ma Clotilde chérie, le 2 mars, 1850*, was no ordinary child, especially since one half of the book was devoted to ascetical meditations and the other half to the liturgy.

A ten-year-old girl whose preparation for her First Holy Communion was as profound as a cloistered nun's retreat for solemn profession was no ordinary girl.

For the whole month of May preceding her First Holy Communion on June 11, 1853, Clotilde meditated and formulated practices for herself, all of which she wrote down in French in a journal entitled *Instructions to Prepare Myself for My First Holy Communion*. Under date of May 7, 1853, she wrote in this journal:

I have only one month in which to prepare myself for my First Holy Communion; but since this is the month of the Holy Virgin, I wish to place in her all my hope. What is the Holy Virgin for me? She is my protector, my advocate before God. She is *my Mother*.

Under date of May 8 she wrote:

There is in me a life much higher than the physical.
. . . I want to learn how to know this noblest part of

myself, my soul, in order to embellish it with Christian virtue, to make it worthy of heaven. Heaven is my only end. . . . I pray that I may form the habit of recalling often the presence of that great God who is always at my side, and the presence of my guardian angel, who sees all my actions; and that, penetrated by the right intentions, I may never have the least thought which could offend the eye of my God. . . . I must begin also to understand my relations with a world which is invisible for me but in the midst of which I live. This world is the society of the good and of the evil. There are my relations with the Church, of whom I am a child and who watches over me. There are my relations with the just who desire my good and, alas, there are also my relations with those perfidious souls who by their example and their counsels can lead me to my perdition.

The other meditations in the journal had such titles as "The End of My Existence," "Sin," "The Holy Spirit," "The Love of God," "Mary, Model of Virtue," "The Life of Jesus in the Eucharist." The practices she imposed upon herself were specific and substantial: "freely to make a small privation; every day, at a fixed hour, to recall interiorly the presence of God and to adore Him in the depths of my heart; to do promptly and amiably the things I dislike; to share with the poor a part of my pleasures."

For three days before her First Holy Communion she made a triduum under the direction of Archbishop Andrea Charvaz of Genoa, who gave two conferences a day in the Castle of Stupinigi, where the royal family was staying at the time. After each conference she wrote a summary of the Archbishop's words. The summaries of the six conferences she entitled *Résumé of the Instructions of Archbishop Charvaz, Offered to My Good and Dear Mamà*. In the first summary, commenting on the Archbishop's ex-

planation of the workings of divine grace, she wrote: "Henceforth divine grace in me will no longer operate without me." In the summary of the last conference, the subject being the dispositions for First Holy Communion, she wrote: "Filial fear and loving confidence will prepare me to unite myself to my divine Saviour and will make of my First Holy Communion the most beautiful day of my life."

As directives for her whole life, Clotilde made nineteen detailed resolutions which she wrote down and gave to her mother with the manuscript of her summaries of the Archbishop's conferences. The resolutions began with these words, "I wish henceforth to act only to please You: and here are the resolutions which I take," and ended with this prayer, "O God, who will one day ask an account of all my actions, give me the strength and constancy to observe these resolutions and deign to bless them. Amen."

At eight o'clock on Saturday morning, June 11, 1853, Clotilde and her brother Humbert made their First Holy Communion in the parish church of Stupinigi. After the Mass, at which were present the royal family and a few intimate friends, the Archbishop administered the sacrament of confirmation to the two royal children. Saturday being our Lady's day, there was a blue sash on Clotilde's frilly white dress; and under the white tulle Clotilde's golden brown hair, parted in the middle, hung in tight, neat curls to her shoulders. Everything was very simple. The Queen wanted no external extravagance to distract her children from the spiritual importance of the day.

In the evening, after the guests had departed and Clotilde was alone with her family, her grandmother asked her, "Kekina, what did you ask for this morning when you had Jesus in your heart?"

Without hesitation she answered, "Never to be queen."

And yet Clotilde was glad to be a princess. On several

occasions she had said of herself, "I am glad to be a princess because a princess has many duties."

A princess at the Court of Turin in the middle of the nineteenth century still lived like a medieval princess of the House of Savoy—a life which was simple, disciplined, austere even. Unlike the larger courts of Europe, the Court of Turin was ruled by rigid norms of morality and etiquette, particularly during the reign of King Charles Albert. Although Victor Emmanuel was inclined to be liberal and lax with himself, so much so that Queen Maria Teresa once said in a moment of exasperation with him, "But where did this son of mine come from? He has been born only to be the desperation of all of us," he demanded discipline and order in his family.

Clotilde's disciplined upbringing was not mitigated even when her father became king and her mother queen after the abdication of King Charles Albert in 1849. Nor was it mitigated when more children were born into the royal household. By the time Clotilde was ten years old, she had four brothers and one sister: Humbert, aged nine, the robust and aggressive Prince of Piedmont; Amedeo, aged eight, the Duke of Aosta, who was growing taller and more wiry every day and looking more and more like his grandfather Charles Albert; Oddone, aged seven, the Duke of Montferrat, who was rachitic and whom Clotilde cherished with a special love because she sensed he would not live long; Maria Pia, aged six, a beautiful child with black hair and black eyes, of whom her brother Humbert was later to say, "All the good looks of our father and mother meet in Maria Pia"; Charles Albert, aged two, who was to die shortly after his third birthday.

The two princesses were educated by private tutors in the Royal Palace, an education supplemented by the affectionate training and example of the Queen and the Queen

Mother. In fact, the Queen had insisted on taking care of Clotilde's upbringing until she was five, at which time she was given her first governess, the Marquise Pallavicini. The boys, particularly Humbert and Amedeo, received a sturdier education from private tutors at Moncalieri, in the red castle situated on a hill four miles south of Turin, overlooking the Po River and with a view of the snow-covered Alps in the distance.

The training of the princesses was marked by a greater emphasis upon morality and religion, since both the Queen and the Queen Mother were deeply religious. Besides the chapel in the palace, in which Mass was celebrated daily by the court chaplain, there was the *Duomo* of San Giovanni, the cathedral with its royal tribune, where on Sundays and special feasts the royal family assisted at Mass and other religious functions. Another royal chapel, that of the Holy Shroud (so called because it contains the winding sheet with which the body of the dead Christ was wrapped), is situated behind the main altar of the cathedral. Both houses of prayer are contiguous to the Royal Palace and can be entered by private passageways leading from the royal apartments. Occasionally the royal family attended Mass or some other spiritual function in the tribunes of the Royal Church of San Lorenzo in Piazza Castello. This seventeenth-century church, with its distinctive cupola and bizarre curves and colors, is one of the best examples of Piedmontese baroque architecture. And finally there was the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation, popularly known as La Consolata. It was to this ancient shrine of the Virgin Mary that the Queen, the Queen Mother, and the two young princesses often went to venerate the image which tradition says is miraculous; and today the places where Marie Adelaide and Maria Teresa often knelt are marked by

two marble statues of the two queens depicting them in the attitude of prayer.

Clotilde's daily schedule when she was ten years old was probably not much different from the one which she noted in her diary five years later:

Rise a little before six o'clock.

Toilette, which lasts until seven.

From seven until seven forty-five, I say my prayers for a half hour, then write in my diary if there is time.

Mass and breakfast with my little sister, Maria Pia.

From eight-thirty until ten, Abbé Pascal, one of the professors, every day except Saturday and Sunday.

From ten until eleven, Monsieur Geer, another professor, every day except Saturday and Sunday.

From eleven until eleven forty-five, on ordinary days, homework given by my teachers. Toilette.

At twelve, dinner and then recreation until two.

From two until three on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Monsieur Beccaria, teacher of painting; Friday is especially given to figurines.

On Tuesday and Saturday, Madame Unia, teacher of sewing.

On Thursday, from six to seven—on the other days from four-thirty until six—Madame Doria, teacher of dancing and good manners. All the time that is left after Madame Doria leaves is given to my tasks and lessons.

At seven-thirty, supper. Then, on Monday and Wednesday, Maria Pia and I have a lesson in dancing. On the other days we have recreation until nine, then prayers and to bed.

Mass is ordinarily said at seven forty-five except on Thursday and Sunday when it is said at eight.

On Saturday Abbé Pascal comes from eight-thirty until ten, and Abbé Bogej comes from ten until eleven.

We go to the eleven o'clock Mass at La Consolata, where there is exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

On Sunday, after Mass, we devote our time to performing our tasks if there are any. From ten until eleven, high Mass. After dinner our brothers come to see us and on these occasions we spend all our time with them. Meanwhile we go to the sermon and Benediction at the Cathedral of San Giovanni, and after that we keep busy until seven-thirty.

On Thursday morning there are lessons in German. At ten-thirty we ordinarily go to Moncalieri, where we remain almost the entire day.

On Sunday and Thursday evenings there is ordinarily some small reunion, which lasts from eight until ten-thirty.

The upbringing of the royal children, however, was not all study and discipline. They had their games, their horse-back riding, their vacations at the castles of Moncalieri, Racconigi, Stupinigi, and Casotto. And, even more important, they indulged in the noisy fun of normal children. In the later years of her life Clotilde used to recall the earliest days of her childhood, when her grandfather was still king, and relate how she and her brothers would run into his bedroom in the early hours of the day, hop on his bed to bid him good morning, and refuse to leave until he gave them the caramels and milk chocolates he reserved in his bedside table.

But for Clotilde, at least, recreation and pleasure were soon to be subordinated to what she considered more important. As she grew older, she became more and more serious, more aware of her duties, more reflective about what she saw and heard.

She had watched her father on March 27, 1849, when as king he had passed in review for the first time between the

rows of the National Guard in Piazza Castello and received their salutes of allegiance; and she had been puzzled to see him weep when he entered the Royal Palace after the ceremony. She could not know at six years old that Victor Emmanuel was weeping at the remembrance of the self-imposed exile of his father, who had abdicated so that a new and more vigorous king might be able to redeem the disgrace of the Italian defeats at Custoza and Novara. But she did reflect that kings are not always the happiest persons on earth.

She had often thought over what the two queens had said to her. To be a princess means *noblesse oblige*. Being a princess implies making oneself better than others—more virtuous, more courageous, more compassionate; the duty of working harder, of giving good example. Sometimes in church, either in the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud or at the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation, when she became excited over the compliments that people paid to her curls or to the pretty blue and white dress she always wore on Saturday because it was our Lady's day, she would hear the two queens saying, "Before God we are all equal."

And there was the example of her little brother Oddone, day by day becoming sweeter in disposition the frailer he became in health, at whose side Clotilde hovered like a solicitous mother around a sickbed.

But perhaps none of these maturing influences were as deep and lasting as her first encounter with the reality of death, especially when death touched the faces of those whom she had loved with her whole heart. Within five months, from January 12 to May 17, 1855, Clotilde, who was then almost twelve, lost in death her grandmother, her mother, an uncle, and her newly born baby brother.

At the beginning of January, 1855, Queen Marie Ade-

laide gave birth to another child, a boy who was named Victor Emmanuel. In the excitement over the new baby, no one had noticed the change in the ailing Queen Mother Maria Teresa, who had already been given the Last Sacraments. Clotilde watched in ecstasy before the pink and blue creation which had cradled her and her brothers and sister. Her mother was ill, too ill for visitors, she had been told; and as the eldest child she felt she must be mother to her new baby brother. She would tiptoe in and out of the nursery and then report to Humbert, Amedeo, and Maria Pia, who were not allowed to see the newborn, how their youngest brother was faring.

Then early on Friday morning, January 12, the King took his eldest child aside to tell her as simply as he could that her grandmother had died unexpectedly during the night. The next day, before the Queen Mother's body was taken away to be entombed in the Basilica of Superga, the King brought Clotilde to see the remains of her beloved grandmother. The body had been dressed in a soft gown of white and blue, and Clotilde remembered that her mother and her grandmother too always dressed in white and blue on Saturday, and this day of her grandmother's burial was Saturday. And she heard someone whisper to her, "See how peaceful she looks, for now she is in paradise with Grandfather Charles Albert."

Clotilde was not permitted to take part in the elaborate funeral cortege which followed the hearse to Superga on the outskirts of Turin, but she was content to stay home when she was told that her mother was to be anointed and that the anointing would make her better if it were God's Will.

The last time that Clotilde saw her mother in life was two days before the Queen's death. The description of that

last visit can best be told in Clotilde's own words as she recalled the event in her diary three years later:

The eighteenth of January was the last day I saw my mother. About four o'clock in the afternoon Papà sent for me. In my room when the maid came to get me was my uncle Eugene.

This good father said to me, "Do you want to see your mother?" It is easy to surmise what my answer was. Then he led me to my mother's bedroom and told me to stay at the door. Going near to the bedside, he said to my mother, "Do you want to see Clotilde?" She motioned for me to come near the bed. My mother had her beautiful hair spread out on the pillow, forming a beautiful contrast to her pale and thin face. When I entered the room she was moaning. Papà told me it was nothing, that her arm was hurting her. The room was dark. There were only two lights on a small table near the bed, one being before an image of the Virgin which they told me was miraculous. Around the bed were the three of us—Papà, I, and Mademoiselle Pangla, the maid.

When I was near the bed, my mother asked me how I was getting along in my studies, to which I answered that I had been questioned very much in the last few days. Then this saintly mother had them give me some apricot sherbet. She herself was taking many refreshing things because her throat was constantly burning. When I asked my mother how she felt and what sickness she had, she told me that she had the same sickness which my aunt Maria had had, namely, typhoid fever. She then asked for a drink; and after she had drunk, I remember very well her saying in the Piedmontese dialect that the water had been there for a long time. At these words the maid went to get fresh water. Finally, after letting me kiss her cheek in order

to see me better, this holy mother said these last words to me, "Tell Countess Foresto that as soon as I am better I will send for her." These were the last words which I heard from my mother. And after I said good-bye, I left.

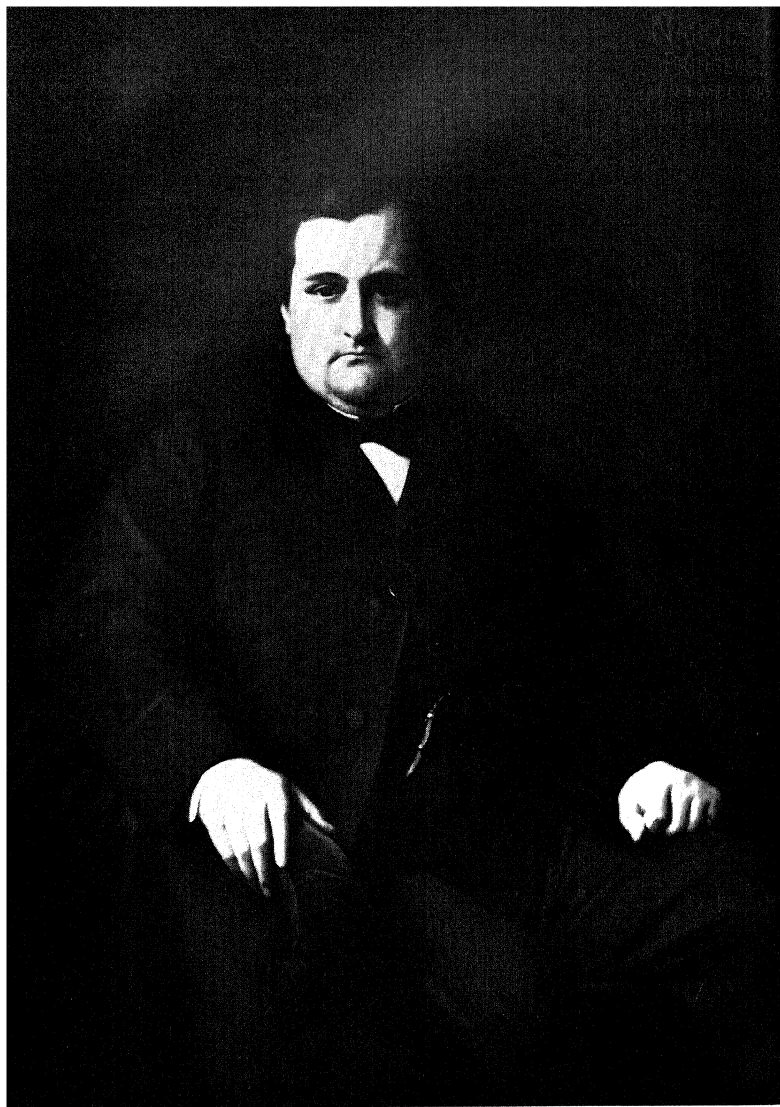
I shall never forget that room, my mother in bed, and her last words which still resound in my ears. Papà told me later that in her delirium this beloved mother talked much of her Clotilde and that she saw me everywhere walking on the cornices of her room. I don't think she realized that she was going to die; otherwise, she would have sent for me.

Queen Marie Adelaide died on the evening of January 20, and her body was entombed in the Basilica of Superga on the next day. The King would not permit Clotilde to attend the funeral because it would entail a long, hard ride in a horse-drawn carriage over the frozen, mostly uphill roads to Superga. The Countess Foresto had taken Clotilde, Humbert, Amedeo, Oddone, and Maria Pia to the Castle of Moncalieri even before the Queen had died, and there they remained for a number of days. The only child at the Royal Palace was the newly born Victor Emmanuel, who was under the care of the Marquise Pallavicini.

Clotilde had hardly returned to the Royal Palace when her father informed her one evening that he was leaving for Genoa. His brother, the Duke of Genoa, had died. She was to remain at Turin, he told her, for now she was the first lady of the Kingdom of Sardinia and she must, moreover, be a mother to her brothers and sister. Had Clotilde gone to Genoa for her uncle Ferdinand's funeral, she might have met for the first time Prince Jerome Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul of France, who was soon to press his suit for the hand of the widowed duchess, the beautiful, blond Elizabeth of Saxony. But in accordance with her father's



PRINCESS CLOTILDE, 1859
Marble Bust by Varni in the Castle of Racconigi
Courtesy of the Coordinating Committee of the



PRINCE NAPOLEON BONAPARTE
Painting by Flandrin in the Museum of Versailles
*Courtesy of the Coordinating Committee of the
Historical Exhibit, Turin, 1961*

wishes she remained in Turin to be with her brothers and sister, especially with the ailing Oddone and the baby Victor Emmanuel, whose health was also giving cause for concern. . . .

March and April of 1855 were lonely months for Clotilde. She was glad that Maria Pia was too young to grasp the terrifying irrevocableness of death. Otherwise she too would be experiencing the black emptiness which was hers. But slowly, at first almost imperceptibly, she found the emptiness filling up with new resources of grace. By the beginning of May, Clotilde knew that something had changed within her—perhaps not so much changed as grown. There were new dimensions of understanding, confidence, compassion. When death would again appear in the face of one whom she loved, it would be met with a serenity the depth of which no vicissitude would ever be able to disturb. And death did appear again, very soon. Her brother of five months died on May 17 of that same year.

By the summer of 1855 Clotilde was herself again, but with a difference. There was greater equanimity, prudence, self-assurance. It was not that these virtues were not hers before the bereavements of 1855, or that their presence was wholly the work of divine grace. Clotilde had inherited some of the sweetness and serenity that had always characterized Marie Adelaide of Austria and even more from her twentieth year, when she had fallen in love with the Duke of Savoy, until her death at the age of thirty-three. And from her father Clotilde had inherited acumen and accuracy of judgment, constancy and courage of will, generosity and nobility of heart.

These qualities had been operative from the beginning of her childhood. Her equanimity and prudence were strikingly displayed when she was about fourteen years old, on the occasion when her music teacher had a sudden attack of

mental derangement. In the room at the time were her ladies in waiting, but they only became frightened and agitated. With one look Clotilde was able to calm them. Then speaking quietly to the deranged man, she succeeded in getting him to come out of her room so that she could get help from one of the servants.

Clotilde's self-confidence and independence were well known at the Court of Turin. When her governess tried to help her examine her conscience for her first confession, Clotilde politely refused the help by saying, "Thank you, but I can manage very well by myself." On another occasion, during the singing of the *Pange Lingua* in a Eucharistic procession, someone handed Clotilde a copy of the hymn, which she refused to take, saying courteously, "Thank you, but I know the hymn by heart."

Her self-assurance was never offensive, going hand in hand with humility and a diffidence which made her seek help whenever it was prudent to do so. During the year of bereavements she wrote a long letter to Bishop Ghilardi of Mondovì, a Dominican, after which she remarked to her governess, "I felt the need of discussing with him certain matters of conscience." It was also at this time that she asked for some tablets of wood to be placed under her mattress, saying, "These are necessary for my temperament."

The flowering of this new state of soul was seen in her tenderness and compassion towards others. If she remembered her own sorrows at all, it was because they helped her to understand others better. To a friend of her own age, Angelica San Saturnino, who later became Countess Calvi di Bergolo, Clotilde wrote in French from the Castle of Casotto on August 16, 1855:

I want to tell you myself, my dear Angelica, how deeply I feel the misfortune which has befallen you.

No one knows better than I how cruel it is to lose a mother at our age and the need which we both have of their tender care. Let us hope that they will still watch over us from heaven; and let us try, dear Angelica, to become like them because here we are, the both of us, little mothers of our brothers and sisters, and we have great need to be just and reasonable. I assure you that this similarity of our positions makes me think of you often. . . . I pray to God to console you and to bless all five children, and I want you to remember always that I sincerely share your sorrow.

Clotilde's most important duty as first lady was being hostess to the guests who came either on a visit or to a court reception. To this duty she brought the thoroughness and self-assurance which she gave to everything else. She familiarized herself with protocol and tried to forestall the oversights and delays which annoyed her sanguine father. When in May, 1857, her father told her that the Empress Mother of Russia, Alexandra Feodorovna, the widow of Czar Nicholas I, would visit their court soon, Princess Clotilde arranged the details of the reception. Her father had told her that the hospitality was to be very special, to help the Russian visitors forget the Crimean War, which had recently ended and in which Sardinia had fought on the side of France and Great Britain. Although Princess Clotilde was only fourteen, she acquitted herself so ably that in leaving, the Empress Mother of Russia, never a woman easy to please, said of her, "Happy the prince who will have that girl as bride."

But if Princess Clotilde was hostess for her father's guests and the first lady at his court, she kept aloof from the political involvements of the time. Queen Marie Adelaide, Queen Maria Teresa before her, and all the women of Sa-

voy before them, had never become involved seriously in politics. It was the pride and boast of Savoy—this tradition which kept the woman of Savoy in what was considered the proper place for her in the oldest reigning dynasty of Europe, namely, that of wife and mother to a prince or king. Paradoxically, the woman of Savoy was politically involved—for her whole life—but her involvement consisted only in the marriage with prince or king which reasons of state dictated; after that her chief concern was to be a good wife and mother. It was not that the woman of Savoy was ignorant of history or politics; on the contrary, she had to be well informed in order to keep herself uninvolved. This was the tradition which Princess Clotilde accepted, and the day would come when she would resist heroically an attack upon this tradition of her house.

Less than six months after the visit of Russian royalty, another very important person for Clotilde visited the Court of Turin. He was Canon Stanislao Gazelli, a learned and holy priest who was to have a lifelong influence upon her. It was under his direction that she began the practice of daily spiritual reading and meditation.

In her youth the spiritual books which Clotilde read were those given to her by her mother and father. Before Queen Marie Adelaide died in 1855, she bequeathed to her daughter the twenty small, red-leather bound volumes of *Exercices de piété pour tous les jours de l'année* by Père Jean Croiset, S.J. These volumes had once belonged to the Venerable Maria Clotilde of Bourbon, the wife of King Charles Emmanuel IV of Sardinia. In 1857, King Victor Emmanuel II gave Clotilde an octavo volume of one of the works of the celebrated Bossuet entitled *Méditations sur l'Evangile*, and later the complete works of Bossuet in a magnificent edition of twelve volumes. And on the eve of

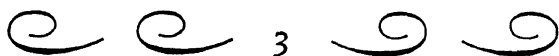
her engagement in 1859, he gave her the six-volumed works of Père Louis Burdaloue, S.J.

Although these books are not easy reading, Clotilde read from them every day in the original French. She noted in her diary that she read from Père Croiset while her maid combed her hair, and from the others while she was out riding in her carriage. Daily spiritual reading was food for her meditations, fuel for her affective prayers.

On Christmas Day, 1857, the fourteen-year-old princess knelt alone in the tribune of the Chapel of the Crucifixion in the Royal Palace, meditating on the one most important event in human history, a God becoming man out of His love for mankind. Before 1857, Christmas for Clotilde had been the feast of the Christ Child—a pretty babe in shiny straw and a pretty Madonna kneeling in adoration, as in Correggio's painting. But on this Christmas Day, Clotilde was hardly aware of the *crèche* which she herself had helped to arrange on Christmas Eve, making sure that the hay in the manger formed a pillow for the curly head of the statue of the divine Infant. Instead, her eyes rested on the life-sized marble figure on the cross above the main altar. For the first time Clotilde realized that a mystery achieves deeper meaning if it is viewed in relation to another mystery: that a God was born a man is no more incomprehensible than a God dying as a man; that life and death are always the two sides of the coin of Christian mystery.

When she arose from the red-cushioned *prie-dieu*, her whole being was reeling with light, and she had to steady herself before she could return to her private apartment in which the spiritual tended to be smothered under the heavy gilt and brocade and the flashy reds of the palace's baroque interior. But the resolution had been taken: nothing would ever keep her from withdrawing for a time every

day into this world of mystery in which, like Saint Thomas the Apostle, she had touched Christ with her hands. At the end of a half century she would celebrate the remembrance of this Christmas Day by giving her friends a Christmas card bearing the inscription: "1857-1907 Meditation."



CLOTILDE'S FIFTEENTH YEAR

In the archives of the Dominican Generalate of Santa Sabina in Rome is the original diary written in French by Princess Clotilde from January 1, 1858, to January 29, 1859, inclusive. Presumably she kept a diary for this one year only, the fifteenth year of her life. Why? Clotilde never told anyone.

The first entry in the diary reads:

January 1, Friday. Arose at the usual time. Prayers with Maria Pia, whom I had to get up. Mass with my brothers at seven-thirty. Then Camilla [the assistant governess] read to us from Père Croiset something pertaining to the Venerable Maria Clotilde. Maria Pia, Camilla, and I have taken the resolution to renew every day during this new year the act of consecration to Saint Louis Gonzaga, and we have also decided that if one of us should die during this year that the other two will continue the prayer for her. At about ten-thirty we went to San Giovanni [the cathedral] for high Mass. Then at about 11:30 we visited with our dear brothers. Our good Oddone also came. We had

dinner with Papà, who is not feeling very well. This dear Papà gave all of us some beautiful New Year's gifts. He gave me a beautiful pair of opera glasses. We remained with our brothers until four, and it was while we were there that I received a beautiful gift from Uncle Eugene. At four o'clock Countess della Volvera visited us. Then we went to sing the *Te Deum* at San Giovanni. Afternoon luncheon. Our brothers left. Until supper we occupied ourselves tranquilly. Lesson from Monsieur Desio. Tea with Camilla. Finally, prayers and bed.

On January 6 she wrote:

Wednesday, Feast of the Three Kings. Mass at eight with my brothers. Then we went to San Giovanni for high Mass where we heard a beautiful sermon by Padre Pelletta on the renewal of the baptismal promises. Oh, how the words of that good father went to my heart! How I liked the moment when, after we had renewed the holy baptismal promises, the Padre expressed the hope that we would be able to fulfill what we had promised. He seemed truly inspired. We had to leave at the Sanctus of the Mass because it was almost noon. We found our dear brothers in the salon. How pleased we are to see one another in these days.

Had dinner with Papà, my brothers, and my uncle. Magnificent sweetmeat boxes. Then we remained with my brothers. I showed Papà a letter from my cousin, the Duchess of Montpensier, who wrote that the Queen of Spain, her sister, had bestowed on me the Decoration of Marie Louise. Delicious afternoon luncheon with my brothers, with Don Anzino, whom we love very much, and with Carlo di Villamarina. At three o'clock we all went to San Giovanni, where we heard the end of the catechetical instruction by Canon Gazelli. We assisted at Vespers and Compline and at the announcement of the movable feasts of the year.

It was wonderful to see a priest in a cloak of gold silk ascend the pulpit to sing in Latin all the feasts of the year. Benediction followed. Then, at about four-thirty, departure of my dear brothers. Supper at six-thirty. Toilette.

At eight began our soiree, which Papà and our uncle graced for a few minutes with their attendance. . . . After all had talked for a while in the salon, Papà and Uncle left but we remained to eat some sweets. . . . There was a grand distribution of sweetmeat boxes. Then we danced until ten-thirty, when all left. The orchestra had been composed of Count Villamarina and Mademoiselle Floria. After the departure of our guests, Maria, Camilla, and I ate a few more sweets and drank a little more tea. Prayers and to bed about eleven. The second phase of my cold. I had an enjoyable time.

The other entries in the diary are of the same tenor: the events may differ but the mood is the same, that of a disciplined and religious but happy girl. Moreover, spontaneity and joy run through much of the diary like a recurring chord in a musical composition. There is occasionally even a bit of humor; for example, when she refers to her inability to master the rules of computing interest.

A diarist, however, does not ordinarily use his diary merely as a memo pad or as a journal of events and ideas. A diary is an outlet for feelings, especially in moments of conflict and crisis. And the year of 1858, or at least the second half, was a time of crisis for the fifteen-year-old princess. But nowhere in Clotilde's diary is there mention or hint of inner conflict, and nowhere in the diary from January, 1858, to the end of December, 1858, is Prince Napoleon mentioned. There is only one entry, dated January 7, 1858, which might suggest his name. The entry, in part, reads: "Today I learned of the death of Mademoiselle

Rachel. Happily this celebrated dramatic artist was baptized a month ago. This death is an evident proof of the goodness of God, who wanted to give to a Jewess the necessary time to be converted and to receive shortly thereafter the reward of her courage and strength of mind. . . ." Although most of Europe had heard of the famous tragedienne of the Comédie Française and at least most of France knew she had been one of the great loves of Prince Napoleon, it is not likely that Clotilde thought of him when she wrote about Rachel's death because in January, 1858, the meeting at Plombières had not yet taken place.

When Clotilde left Turin on July 23, 1858, for a month's stay at the Castle of Casotto situated near Mondovì and at that time a day's journey from Turin, she already knew of the marriage proposal, a proposal which was, in her own words, "so contrary to my ideas." Yet, on July 23, this is all she wrote in her diary:

Friday. Rose at three forty-five this morning. Breakfast. At five o'clock we left for the railroad station, where we found Count Cigala, who traveled with us as far as Cavallermaggiore. Since Mademoiselle Salasco has a cold, she remained at Turin. Second breakfast at Fossano, where we spoke with Marquise Pallavicini, who was on her way to Ceva. Since Countess Villamarina had a migraine headache, Mademoiselle Foras came in the carriage with us. Attended Mass at Vico, where we made the acquaintance of the Vicar General of the diocese of Mondovì, and also met Count Ighina. Arrival at San Michele, where Marquise Pallavicini was waiting with Abbé Bogej. At three o'clock, departure for Casotto, where we arrived after eight. After several stops, seeing Madame Nasi and Madame Constance, and the religious authorities of Papira and Serra, we met our brothers along the way. At the valley of Casotto we found Bishop Ghilardi, who was coming to

make his pastoral visit. Supper and prayers in common with our brothers. We had the pleasure of being together again.

The Castle of Casotto, situated in an almost inaccessible valley in the snow-capped Apennines, had once been a Carthusian monastery dating back to Saint Bruno in the eleventh century. With some renovations, King Victor Emmanuel II used it as a hunting lodge; but the ancient church, the cells, the cemetery, the well, and the vast park with its pines and mountain streams were so many concrete allusions to the monks who had lived and died there.

The living quarters in the castle were plain. There were no velvety or tapestried walls, no mythologically storied ceilings, nothing of the gilt and plush of the Royal Palace. But there was room enough for each of the royal family, the ladies in waiting, the aides-de-camp, the tutors, and some of the servants, when the heat in Turin became unbearable. There was also room enough for an apartment for the Count and the Countess Villamarina and an apartment for "*la bella Rosin*," the commoner whom the King made a countess and eventually took as hismorganatic wife.

Clotilde had always loved the weeks she spent at the Castle of Casotto—the silence and solitude of the surrounding mountains were bread and wine to her spirit. And in the summer of 1858 she had greater need of this bread and wine, for she was facing the first crisis of her life. Externally she pursued the routine she had scheduled for herself: rising at five forty-five; daily Mass; lessons in French, German, music, and designing; work of various kinds. On Sundays she attended two Masses and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and tried, in the words of her diary, "to occupy myself a little more than usual with the good God . . . in order to become always better." But those around her knew why she went for longer walks on the pine-sentineled roads

of the park, why she spent more time before the Blessed Sacrament. . . .

King Victor Emmanuel came to the Castle of Casotto on August 12, arriving in time to have the noonday meal with his children. When they had finished, he indicated to Clotilde that he wanted to talk with her. Her brothers and Maria Pia left as the King pulled out some papers from a portfolio which he had brought with him. Clotilde went to sit beside him, in the chair occupied during the meal by her brother Humbert.

Handing Clotilde the long-winded report which Cavour had sent him after the meetings at Plombières, the King said to his daughter, "These are from Cavour. Read them, Kekina; think over what he has to say and then write to him. I have already written to Cavour, and here is a copy of what I wrote. I want to read part of it to you so that you will know exactly what your father thinks and how he feels."

He read only this one paragraph: "But I will never consent to sacrifice Clotilde, to do her any violence whatsoever. Yes, I shall speak to her about the marriage, but only to tell her that she is free, most free to do what she pleases." He could not trust his emotion to read more. Instead, he gave her the report. Then, putting his right arm around her shoulders, he said huskily, "I am going horseback riding this afternoon. Tomorrow I shall go hunting and you know what that means—getting up at dawn. Tell your brothers we shall have supper together this evening."

As soon as her father left, Clotilde went to her green-appointed bedroom. Sitting at her small desk, she read Cavour's letter carefully, reading more slowly his arguments why a marriage between the House of Savoy and the House of Bonaparte was not unseemly, and rereading the section

which was Cavour's defense of Prince Napoleon. Then, taking the quilled pen in her right hand and without erasure of any kind, she wrote to Cavour in her somewhat flourishing but firm handwriting:

My dear Count,

I thank you a thousand times for the devotion shown in all circumstances to the King my father and to me. And now that he has spoken to me of so important a matter as that of my marriage, I must thank you doubly.

I know everything which you have done in these last-named circumstances and I have also seen the papers which you have sent the King.

I have already thought much about it, but this matter of my marriage to Prince Napoleon is most serious and, above all, it is something entirely contrary to my ideas.

I also know, my dear Count, that the marriage can be something advantageous to the future of a nation like ours and above all to the King my father.

I have already given the matter much thought; I shall continue to do so and hope that the Lord will guide me with His infallible help. I put everything into His hands for the time being, for I cannot decide anything. We shall see a little later.

Please continue, my dear Count, to have for the King and for me the affection which is so dear to both of us.

MARIA CLOTILDE

The letter finished, she went outdoors, breathing deeply as she walked in the direction of one of the streams, as if her body had need of the coolness of the mountain air. . . .

As he had promised, the King returned in time to have supper with his children, after which he bade each one of them an affectionate good-bye. He would not see them again until they were at Racconigi at the end of August.

When he kissed Clotilde, she told him that she had written to Cavour, nothing more.

That night, before retiring, Clotilde wrote in her diary: "*August 12, Thursday, Feast of Saint Clare.* We anticipated dinner because of the arrival of Papà as we did not want to keep him waiting. Dinner with him. After a few minutes with my brothers, he kept me for a while to speak with me and he gave me some papers to read. At three-thirty we went fishing in spite of the hard rain. Returned about seven. Toilette, of which we had great need. Supper with Papà. Good-byes."

The next morning the King and his aides arose before dawn and soon thereafter the sounds of prancing hoofs and the barking of hounds indicated that the King's party had started out.

That night Clotilde wrote laconically in her diary: "*August 13, Friday, Feast of Saint Philomena.* Papà left about four o'clock this morning but we did not see him. The weather permitted us to go outdoors this evening and draw in the open."

But if the Princess wrote nothing unusual in her diary and went about as though nothing were disturbing her, there was someone who was very much disturbed and was venting his disturbance on everyone around him. The someone was Prime Minister Cavour.

Clotilde's letter had only added coals to the fire of his impatience. The rough draft of his answer, now in the state archives of Turin, is almost illegible because of the many corrections he had made while writing it. But in the final draft, dated August 15 and placed in the hands of Count Villamarina for delivery, none of Cavour's impatience showed—only his flattery:

Madam,

I feel it my duty to express to Your Royal Highness

the profound gratitude with which I am filled for the expressions of great benevolence which Your Highness has deigned to send me and also to express my admiration and sympathy for the noble sentiments which animate you toward the King your father and toward your country.

If I had not been certain beforehand, the letter which Your Royal Highness has written me would have left no doubt in my mind that whatever be the decision which Your Highness will make, it will be worthy of the granddaughter of the magnanimous King who sacrificed his throne and his life for the glory of his people and be worthy of the daughter of the generous King whom all Europe admires for his example of constancy and loyalty.

The goodness of Your Royal Highness encourages me to address you this one prayer: that you will permit me, when you come to Racconigi, to present myself before you in order to be able, with the permission of the King your father, to explain the motives of my conduct in an affair which touches so closely Your Royal Highness and on which may depend the future of your august family and of your country.

Cavour could personally go no further. The King had made it plain to his Prime Minister that his daughter was not only to be left alone in making her decision; she was not to be hurried. But if the Prime Minister's hands were bound, the hands of others were not. He had a good ally for his cause in Count Bernardo di Villamarina, assistant tutor of the royal princes since 1853. Although Count Villamarina had little opportunity to observe and get in touch personally with Clotilde, he tried to operate through his wife, Carolina, who was the governess of the two princesses—tried, because the Countess was opposed to the idea of a marriage between Clotilde and Prince Napoleon. She

had, in fact, already expressed her objections to both the Princess and the King.

Following Cavour's wishes to be kept minutely informed on every movement of Princess Clotilde, Count Villamarina wrote frequently to Cavour, sometimes daily. How frequently he wrote depended on how much information he could wheedle out of his wife.

On August 17 Count Villamarina wrote to Cavour from Casotto:

Dearest Friend,

Following your instruction relative to your letter, I saw to it that the letter was given to Princess Clotilde as if it had just arrived with the regular messenger.

I learned later from my wife that the Princess read your letter attentively and that while reading it, two large tears welled up in her eyes. Judge for yourself the meaning of this since it was impossible for Carolina to surmise, the Princess having said nothing but these words, "I shall write soon to Papà." Be on the lookout, for the letter will probably be sent out tomorrow and it should reach the King the following day. I know, moreover, that the Princess for a long time has been taciturn, deeply thoughtful and reflective; that she opens her heart to no one, only praying continually with much fervor; that the proposed marriage has little appeal for her, not so much because of the person of the Prince as because of his moral qualities which she knows minutely, more minutely than any one of us. Where did she get the information? No one knows.

Even the idea that a princess of Savoy must marry a parvenu offends considerably her self-respect and is repugnant to her pride.

Now, put together all I have said above, add a young head of fifteen years, with little or no experience of the things of the world and of society, a continual

retirement and an excessive piety, and you will understand how the poor mind of the Princess at this moment must be a volcano!

Exteriorly she is tranquil and gentle as usual, her health fine and her appetite very good; and I, who have known her very well for many years, am persuaded that once she has spoken with you, she will calm herself and be more submissive. She is a young woman of spirit who has to be persuaded by the good reasons of serious and worthy men. On the other hand, I must tell you that my wife inadvertently let it be known, among other things, that to please her father and for the good of her country, Clotilde would be generous enough to sacrifice her convictions and her own future.

These words have weight. Take heart, therefore, and continue with courage. My heart tells me that everything will turn out all right. . . .

B

The next day Count Villamarina wrote again to Cavour:

Dearest Friend,

Coming to my wife today, I found her in tears, and you, my friend, will understand and be compassionate toward her. As the result of the abrupt dismissal of Countess Foresto, the poor woman has had to suffer the criticisms and rumors of all the silly Turinese society.

What will happen when the projected marriage of the Princess is made public? People will say that she had a hand in it and who knows, they will say, for what recompense.

On the other hand, the motherly affection which she has for the Princess, the little regard she has for Prince Napoleon, are reasons that urge her to discourage the fulfillment of this marriage.

However, after I indicated to her all the good which would result to our beloved country, my good wife

promised me not to interfere in the carrying out of our intention but to limit herself to giving the girl maternal advice in the event of this marriage. This is where things stand at this moment. If anything new develops, I'll keep you informed.

If you have anything to tell me or to advise me, do so freely, for you will find in me a poor and weak person but one who will serve you with all his heart and devotion in a cause which is so beautiful and noble.

Good-bye, dear friend, stay well and firmly continue in this glorious enterprise.

Your affectionate friend,

B

P.S. It is not true that my wife threw herself at the feet of the King, weeping and imploring pity for the Princess his daughter. She limited herself to speaking of the inadvisability of the projected marriage, disapproving of it because it would be a source of trouble for the future of the Princess. However, Carolina has promised me not to repeat such disapproval either to His Majesty or to Clotilde.



NO LONGER FREE TO SAY NO

The Countess di Villamarina could have satisfied her husband's curiosity relative to the source of Clotilde's knowledge of Prince Napoleon, but the faithful governess was not telling her husband everything she knew. One of Clotilde's former tutors had been a French teacher of history who had no use for the Bonapartes, least of all for Prince Napoleon. The tutor had been dismissed, but her pupil still remembered so much that it enabled her to say to Countess Villamarina: "It isn't that the Prince has no attraction for me because of his physical qualities, for I have never seen him. It's his moral qualities that frighten me and these I know minutely, better than any of you know them."

King Victor Emmanuel II had meanwhile discovered the plot between Cavour and Villamarina in spying on his daughter's every move, and he was furious. He gave both of them not so much a tongue lashing as an eye lashing: when Victor Emmanuel was angry, he spit out fire more with his eyes than with his tongue.

Count Villamarina became upset at the rebuke, but

Cavour hastened to pacify his accomplice by insisting that the King was not really displeased with the assistant tutor of his three sons. Even more gratuitous was Cavour's rationalization of the King's conduct toward his daughter, attributing it to weakness of character.

Under date of August 23, Cavour wrote to Count Villamarina, who was still at Casotto:

Being an extraordinarily weak character, the King does not dare insist with his daughter. Before his daughter he wants to appear as though he is constrained by political necessity. In a word, he wants me to play the part of the tyrant, keeping for himself the part of the generous and affectionate father. Perhaps such conduct is neither noble nor generous, but I don't care. If the King is weak, I am as strong as a rock and in order to attain the holy purpose which we have put before ourselves, I would willingly encounter greater dangers than the hate of a girl and the ire of courtiers.

On August 27 Clotilde, with her brothers and sister, left Casotto for Racconigi, a city twenty-one miles south of Turin. Her diary states: "Rose at three forty-five. Visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Breakfast. Departure at five."

At four o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at the Castle of Racconigi, originally an ancient fortress but later rebuilt in predominantly neoclassic architectural style and surrounded by a magnificent park of oak trees, lakes, grottoes, shrines, and flowerbeds designed by André Lenôtre, the famous French landscape architect. Clotilde was pleased to find her brother Oddone there. They were all together again, a joy she had not had since the previous December. And being at Racconigi would also mean the opportunity to see Canon Gazelli, who came to visit her shortly after her arrival.

Clotilde's slowness in making up her mind was also beginning to exasperate the Emperor of France. Partly to pacify the Emperor and partly to see if the projected marriage were really a condition of the political alliance, King Victor Emmanuel sent Costantino Nigra, the handsome secretary of Count Cavour, to Paris. It was during his stay at Paris and at Saint-Cloud that the tall, curly-headed Nigra came under the fascination of the willowy, auburn-haired Empress of France; and he became torn between his passion for the Empress, who opposed political involvement with Italy, and his love for Italy, which urged him to work toward securing a political alliance with France.

But while sovereigns and diplomats were anxiously awaiting her decision, the fifteen-year-old Princess Clotilde was making a novena at Racconigi. A novena for the Feast of our Lady's Nativity had been the first novena she had ever made, when she was only two years old; and now Canon Gazelli had suggested the same novena in order to receive divine guidance. Every morning, from the second-floor tribune of the royal chapel, Clotilde kept her eyes on the marble statue of the Madonna and Child above the main altar as she pleaded with our Lady to intercede for her.

On the feast of September 8, in the late morning of a mild and sunny day, Clotilde took a walk in the park around the castle. Everything was beautiful, almost romantic—singing birds, flowing waters, full-blown flowers, and the oak trees forming a baldachin overhead. But Clotilde saw or heard nothing of all this. Then suddenly, as she herself was to relate many years later to her confessor, seemingly out of nowhere came the answer and peace. It was not exactly the voice of God which she heard, because it was not in the first person—it was in the third person. It was as though the subconscious, the depths in which the truer self

lived and loved, were saying to the self of her fears and doubts, "And if the Lord wished to use you for the spiritual good of these people, would you say no?"

Early in the afternoon of the same day, Count Cavour arrived at Racconigi to see the Princess in accordance with an appointment made by the King. Clotilde listened respectfully to the lengthy arguments of Cavour—she had heard them all before. She rose when he had finished and said quietly, "I will give my decision to my father."

After Cavour left, Clotilde wrote in her diary: "Arrival of His Excellency, Count Cavour before Papà. . . . Departure of Papà by train at three thirty-eight and departure of Count Cavour on the four twenty-two train."

The next day Clotilde told her father that she would give only a tentative yes to the marriage proposal, deferring a definitive answer until she had had an opportunity to meet Prince Napoleon, because she did not think she could marry a man whom she found physically repulsive. The King immediately relayed her answer to Cavour, whose anxiety had brought on a fever and who was now in bed at the Cavour palace in Turin. Hoping to restore Cavour to a calmer view, the King wrote to him on September 10: "I am happy to have rejoiced your heart but to tell the truth you were very much upset, very much more than I. Now my daughter waits to see the individual before deciding. I hope the decision will be orthodox. But if it isn't, the responsibility will be all hers. . . . And her father and the Prime Minister will do what Pilate did—wash their hands of it."

The King's semigood news was supplemented by Count Villamarina, who visited Cavour on September 13 and gave him the latest details which he had been able to extract from his wife. After she had given her decision to the King,

Clotilde had also mentioned it to Countess Villamarina who, in turn, repeated it to her husband. But, the next day, fearing that the details he had given Cavour were not so precise as they might have been, Count Villamarina wrote to Cavour from the Castle of Racconigi:

Dearest Friend,

In the fear that I expressed myself badly last night, repeating to you the words of Princess Clotilde, I thought of writing to you the actual text, thereby rectifying any mistake. Here are the Princess's exact words: "I said to my father to have Prince Napoleon come to Piedmont and that if his person does not repel me, I have made the decision to marry him for the purpose of contributing to the good of my country and to the glory of Papà. Even I shall go to glitter at the Court of France although this is little to my liking."

Now you can be sure that you have the actual words of that dear girl.

I inform you that my wife will be at Turin until three o'clock. If you wish to talk with her, go see her. Good-bye.

Your most affectionate friend,

BERNARDO

Clotilde's tentative decision was relayed to Emperor Napoleon at Saint-Cloud by Costantino Nigra. The Emperor listened with an icy calmness which was only a mask for the imperial disquiet. He also listened impassively to Nigra's defense of Victor Emmanuel's dilemma—that as king he wanted the marriage but as father he could not force his daughter. And he shifted in his chair when Nigra began to explain what he called Clotilde's scruples, especially the obligation she felt toward Maria Pia, having promised her mother to take care of her younger sister.

In his report to Cavour on the meeting, Nigra empha-

sized the fact that the Emperor attached such importance to the marriage that if it did not take place, the war against Austria might be delayed. Nigra ended his report on a lighter note by saying that the Emperor had asked him if Princess Clotilde were pretty and that he had answered, "*Elle est ravissante!*"

Two weeks after the conversation between Napoleon III and Nigra, the Emperor wrote from Saint-Cloud to Victor Emmanuel, hoping that a reminder would prod the King to give his daughter a nudge in the right direction. He and the Empress, he wrote, would be most happy if a marriage between Princess Clotilde and Prince Napoleon would take place. To this effusive letter the King answered ten days later. He asked the Emperor to thank the Empress for her expression of benevolence and to tell her that he was sure his daughter would find in the Empress the best of sisters. But the last paragraph of the King's letter expressed only moderate optimism: "As father, a father who loves his daughter very much, I cannot force her and Your Imperial Highness would not want it either. However, you can count on me, Sire. I shall do all in my power. I know my daughter well enough to know how to conduct myself in this matter."

The King's one desire now was to get Prince Napoleon to visit Turin as soon as possible. In order that there be no embarrassment in the event that Clotilde refused the proposal, the King decided to invite the Prince as his guest to a hunting party in November. Prince Napoleon, however, was still far away, having not yet returned from the political missions on which the Emperor of France had sent him. After completing his mission in Algeria in October, he went to Warsaw in the hope of learning the Czar's intentions in the event of war with Austria.

While Prince Napoleon was using his political charm on

the Czar (and later reports were to indicate that he had been successful), Clotilde was preparing to depart from Racconigi and return to the Royal Palace in Turin. Although she had not yet given her definitive yes, the entries in her diary indicate that she considered these her last days as an unmarried princess at Racconigi. On October 25, she wrote, "This evening I gave out the family prayers here for the last time"; and on October 26, "Last dinner all together at Racconigi."

November came and went at Turin but no Prince Napoleon. Even after Prince Napoleon had returned to Paris from Warsaw, the French Emperor considered it inexpedient for him to proceed at once to Italy. Rumors of the Franco-Italian alliance had appeared in the newspapers, and it was the topic of gossip in the courts of Turin and Paris.

Cavour privately could not understand why a girl could not make up her mind to marry a man without first seeing him, especially when the "him" was a cousin of Emperor Napoleon III and the second in line for the throne of France; however, publicly he pretended that Clotilde's wish was understandable, even laudable. He wrote to Alexandre Bixio, secretary to Prince Napoleon: "This desire must seem very natural to the Prince. . . . He is too intelligent and noble-hearted to want his marriage handled like an ordinary contract of buying and selling." After urging Bixio to do all he could to expedite the Prince's visit, he concluded: "We will do all we can, in so far as it depends on us, to see that the Prince is not annoyed, outside of attending one or two Masses, to which we ourselves will accompany him. To this he must resign himself if he doesn't want to see clouds gather on a face which he should desire to see calm and serene."

Although outwardly serene and smiling, Clotilde was sad; and her sadness was amplified in the faces of those around her, as if everyone were in mourning over a death in the household. But life at the Royal Palace could not stop because one man failed to come—there were other visitors who came, very important ones, and they had to be welcomed and fêted. Very early in December there came royal visitors from Russia again, and for three days Princess Clotilde was the gracious, smiling, and apparently happy hostess. Her descriptions of these three days as recorded in her diary gave no hint of disquiet:

December 3, Friday. All morning I was getting ready for the arrival of the Russian princes; finally, after several messages, they arrived at about one o'clock in the afternoon. Grand Duke Constantine Nikolayevich, brother of Emperor Alexander II, now reigning in Russia, and his wife, Grand Duchess Alexandra Josefovna . . . and their son Nicholas Constantinovich, aged eight, were received by Papà at the foot of the grand staircase. There were also Maria Pia, myself, and all the court. The Grand Duchess impressed me with her great beauty, which I had often heard praised. We accompanied our guests to the apartments that we had prepared for them on the same floor. A little later His Imperial Highness came up to us, and for the first time in my life I made the presentation of the ladies and gentlemen of our court. In my opinion His Imperial Highness was perfect, and he entertained us very pleasantly for some time. Then the Grand Duchess also came to see us and was most pleasing. She spoke to me of my mother and of our relatives in Germany whom she also knows. At six we went downstairs for the family dinner. I was between the Grand Duchess and the little Grand Duke. I had made the *grande toilette* in preparation for our going to the Carignano

Theater, to which I alone of us five children went. I liked most of all a musical number by a certain Genoese violinist, who has such a great reputation that he is the only one at Genoa who is permitted to use the violin which Paganini left to his country. There was a scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor* and the dance. We returned at ten-thirty or eleven. After accompanying Their Imperial Highnesses to their apartments, we went to retire. I had worn for the occasion a rose-colored gown, with the cordon of Saint Catherine [a Russian decoration], and I had diamonds on my head.

December 4, Saturday. At twelve we descended from the apartment of the Grand Duchess, where Papà had been visiting. We dined with our brothers, and at two-thirty we descended with Countess Villamarina and Marquis Villanova from a visit with the Grand Duchess. First we went to the Chapel of the Holy Shroud to see the statue of my mother; then we went to see the apartments of honor and the gallery of arms. In one of the salons I admired a magnificent vase, very large, of malachite, which the Emperor of Russia has sent to Papà. At the Gallery of Arms we saw the gentleman who was designing arms, and he showed us those which he had already done. Count Nigra gave me as a gift a book by Cavalier Rovere describing the palace of Turin. At three-thirty we went riding in a calash. In the first carriage were the imperial couple, Maria, and I; in the second, our ladies of court and Marquis Villanova. We showed a bit of Turin to our guests. At four-thirty we returned for our toilette. I had a graceful gown which had been selected for me by my good lady in waiting Mademoiselle Salasco. I had diamonds on my head and around my neck, and I wore the cordon of Saint Catherine. At six we had the diplomatic dinner. I sat between the Grand Duchess and Sir James Hudson, the minister of Great Britain. There were the other foreign ministers with

their wives, the monsignori, all the court of Papà and that of my uncle, in addition to Countess Robilant, Marquise Boyl, and Countess Briançon. After dinner I had to present these three ladies to the Grand Duchess. Then I went to change my gown, putting on a white gown and a green and gold garland, but not the cordon because the Grand Duchess has told me that she never wears it at a ball because she thinks that Saint Catherine might be offended. At nine o'clock we descended for the ball. I made my entrance on the arm of Grand Duke Constantine. There was also Grand Duke Nicholas, dressed as a sailor because he is a navy cadet. On the first day he was dressed in a winter uniform but on this night in a summer uniform. Before descending, our dear little friend showed us an album in which were the names of his prince-relatives, whom he had seen in Germany; and all of us also signed our names. Nicholas is so gentle and good.

I danced the first contradance with Papà and this surprised me a little as I was with the young Grand Duke. In general I enjoyed myself very little. I danced the first waltz with Count Brassier, and the second contradance with Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne. At about eleven o'clock the Grand Duchess left. We left at about midnight. The cotillion I had danced with Count di Foras. We retired at one o'clock. I had to present to the Grand Duchess the monsignori and the ladies of the palace.

December 5, Sunday. Arose at six. Mass with my brothers at eight. At eight-thirty we descended with our guests who made us sit down before they departed because it is a custom in Russia to be seated before departing and before going to a baptism. Finally came the time for parting. As far as I was concerned, the Grand Duchess had been perfect and all had been charmed by her goodness. I also liked her two ladies in waiting.

There were four gentlemen who attended His Imperial Highness. . . .

During the three days that Princess Clotilde was entertaining her father's Russian guests, Count Cavour walked in and out of the festive rooms buttonholing Grand Duke Constantine at every opportunity. The Grand Duke was a gaunt, hawklike giant, sinister and unpredictable, but Cavour courted him because he was the brother of the Russian Czar. Cavour later wrote of his conversation with Grand Duke Constantine to Marquis Villamarina, the Ambassador of Sardinia to Paris:

I had during the dinner and during the ball a long conversation with Grand Duke Constantine. He told me that his brother evinced the greatest interest in the Kingdom of Sardinia and in the Italian cause, that the Czar understood perfectly that a war with Austria is inevitable, in which event Russia would show her sympathy for us and use every influence at her disposal to keep Germany from taking part. But the Grand Duke added that at this moment Russia is in no condition to unsheath the sword. I showed myself very incredulous concerning this "impossibility" and I made him see that a war in Italy could have a great reverberation in the regions bordering on Russia. Then putting aside his reserve, he said that this certainly could be; he knew from an indisputable source that everything is ready in Hungary for a revolt and that the principalities of the Danube in their turn would not remain quiet. I didn't press the matter any further. I limited myself simply to observing that it would be very difficult in such a case for Russia to remain quiet, if all the countries surrounding her had taken fire. . . . The Grand Duke has been even more explicit with the King.

But Cavour had observed more than Grand Duke Constantine during those three days. Speaking later to Marquis Rattazzi, who was unable to be present because of illness, he said: "His Majesty, as usual, was always annoyed although he succeeded very well in hiding his bad humor. The one who comported herself in an admirable manner was that dear little girl, Princess Clotilde. She held her place like a true lady, and the Grand Duke said a number of times, '*Mais c'est une vraie dame, cette petite!*' "

There was no doubt about it. King Victor Emmanuel was becoming more irritable. What had begun as something ancillary to the political alliance seemed now a *sine qua non*. And though he was unhappy about the proposed marriage, he felt that if it had to be, the sooner the better.

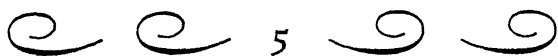
His letter to the French Emperor on December 26, 1858, reveals some of his growing irritation: "While waiting to hear from Your Majesty to know whether you approve my ideas, I beg Your Majesty to send the Prince here about the fifteenth of January, and I also heartily beg Your Majesty to give him full power so that we can resolve the matter of the treaty as soon as possible since I am, Sire, on a volcano! The exaltation of this nation is at an extreme, and I do not know if the Lombards can be kept from committing imprudences until such a time as Your Majesty desires to begin operation."

The first battle cries were heard four months before the war began. On New Year's Day, 1859, at a reception given for the diplomatic corps at the Tuileries, Emperor Napoleon said in his greeting to the Ambassador of Austria: "I am sorry that our relations with your government are not so good as they have been in the past. But I beg you to tell the Emperor that my sentiments for him have not been changed."

And on January 10, in the Piedmontese Parliament, King Victor Emmanuel delivered a speech in which his memorable words, "We are not insensible to the cries of sorrow which arise from so many parts of Italy to us," were a commander in chief's battle cry to his compatriots.

On that same day Clotilde wrote in her diary, "This evening Papà gave me the discourse which he read today in Parliament."

War had been virtually declared by the Emperor of France and the King of Sardinia, a war which depended upon an alliance which had not yet been signed, and the alliance upon which the war depended was in turn dependent upon a marriage which had not yet taken place, and the marriage which had not yet taken place depended upon a consent which had not yet been given. Clotilde felt that though she was still free to say yes, the march of events which sounded like the march of men to the battlefield no longer left her free to say no. What does one do in such circumstances? Years later she was to say, "There was no violence, no sacrifice; I married the Prince because I wanted to marry him." For one who sees in the march of circumstances the "divinity shaping men's ends," and accepts the divine shaping freely, there is no violence, no sacrifice; and one acts because one wishes to do so. For Clotilde the march of circumstances had made concrete the inspiration in the park at Racconigi, and like the King she now wanted Prince Napoleon to come as soon as possible.



ENTER PRINCE PLON-PLON

Prince Jerome Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul Bonaparte—the “amorous negotiator,” as Nigra called him—arrived at Turin on January 16, 1859, with a brilliant entourage including General Niel, Colonel Franconnière, and Commandant Ferri Pisani. To meet the French prince at the railroad station, King Victor Emmanuel had sent his cousin, Prince Eugene of Carignano, who was strongly opposed to the idea of sacrificing Clotilde. As the carriages bearing Prince Napoleon and the others proceeded to Piazza Castello, silent crowds gathered along the way. There was only an occasional “Viva the King!” The ordinary people of Turin did not welcome the French prince. When he sat beside the King in one of the proscenium boxes in the Royal Theater that evening, most of the other boxes, usually filled with the aristocracy, were empty. The aristocrats of Turin did not welcome him either.

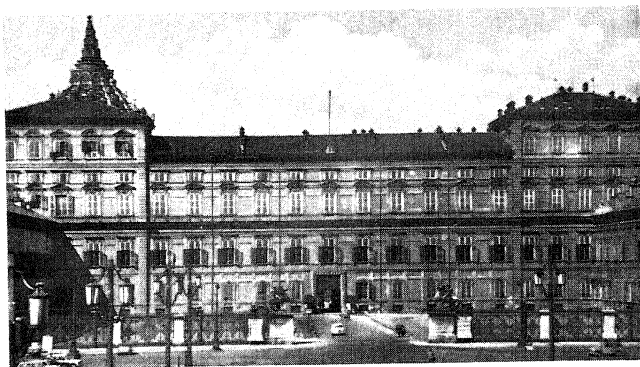
At noon of the next day, January 17, Clotilde stood waiting outside the queen’s reception room, the room in which her mother used to entertain hundreds of guests. It was lavishly furnished—parquetry floor, chandeliers and candelabra, tapestries, paintings in gilt frames, antique jardinières and vases, marble-topped tables, plush chairs. It was a room



PRINCESS CLOTILDE, EX-QUEEN MARIA PIA, AND
EX-QUEEN MARGHERITA, 1910
Courtesy of Padre Celestino Argenta, B., Moncalieri



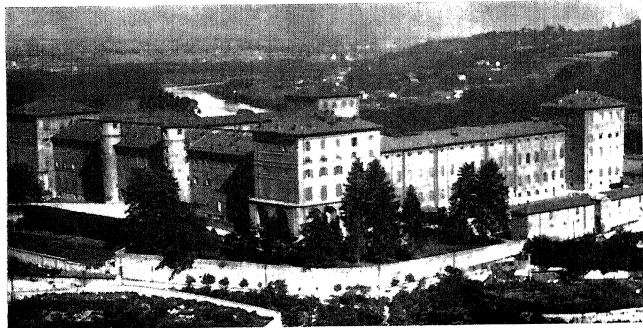
KING VICTOR EMMANUEL II
*Courtesy of Unione-Tipografico Editrice Torinese,
from their publication Vittorio Emanuele II*



ROYAL PALACE, TURIN
Courtesy of Cartotecnica Giovanni Ratti, Turin



CASTLE OF CASOTTO
Courtesy of Doctor Franco Baldracco, Mondovì



CASTLE OF MONCALIERI
Courtesy of Edizioni Sacat, Turin

befitting a first lady, and after her mother's death it had been assigned to Clotilde. Within were now Prince Napoleon and her father in intimate conversation. . . .

In a gown of red tulle, with a hoop skirt, a close-fitting bodice, and billowy sleeves which ended in narrow tight bands around the wrists, Clotilde was a picture of charm and dignity. She was of medium height, but the way she carried herself made her look taller. Her luxuriant hair, which some called golden brown and others light chestnut, was arranged in a plain style, in a *coiffure de bain*. Parted in the middle, the hair was drawn back above her ears and then twisted in two flat rolls, one above the other, the lower one resting midway on the back of her neck. Entwined in the rolls was narrow satin ribbon the same red as her gown. She wore a diamond necklace and diamond earrings. Princess Clotilde had a full face, high forehead, large clear eyes, well-shaped nose, and beautifully curved lips. Her aspect was serious but not severe, and her expression gave the beholder a feeling that within herself she was always smiling, as if she would like to burst into laughter but did not dare.

Was Clotilde beautiful? Some said yes; more said no. One newspaper correspondent said she "was brilliant with beauty." But the correspondent of the *London Times*, on the occasion of her first appearance with Prince Napoleon at the theater in Turin, disagreed, saying, "She is not beautiful but she has what is perhaps better than beauty, a very sweet and amiable expression which, I am assured, is but the faithful mirror of her charming character. She is rather petite and girlish-looking, with brown hair and beautifully white skin. Her bearing was graceful and free from any sort of embarrassment, though her position last night, as the focus of the public gaze, must have been a little trying to a young lady not yet sixteen."

This difference of opinion concerning Clotilde's appearance was to continue for many years. On the occasion of her visit to the United States in 1861, an American correspondent wrote, "Here everybody agrees she is quite beautiful." When Emile Ollivier, the last Prime Minister of Emperor Napoleon III, was asked if Clotilde were beautiful, he answered that she was certainly pleasing to look at and that from her person emanated a special and somewhat mysterious fascination. Neither could Clotilde be called pretty. Her strongly chiseled features excluded all connotations of prettiness. Yet she was totally feminine.

King Victor Emmanuel and Prince Napoleon had been talking for about fifteen minutes before Princess Clotilde was called into the queen's reception room to meet her future husband for the first time. When she heard her father's stentorian voice calling, "Clotilde!" she entered calmly although she could hear her heart hammering within her.

As soon as she reached the two men standing in the center of the room, her father turned to her and said, "Here is kiss the Princess's extended hand. Giving Prince Napoleon he said, "Prince, here is my daughter." The Prince bent to kiss the Princess' extended hand. Giving Prince Napoleon a pat on the shoulder, the King said as he started to walk away, "Now it's up to both of you."

The interview was businesslike, lasting about an hour. The Prince reiterated that their marriage could be of great benefit to both France and Italy, and Clotilde brought the interview to a close by saying that she would give the King her answer. When they both walked out of the reception room they found the King pacing up and down the corridor.

After a slight curtsy to her father, Clotilde asked to be

excused and went to her apartment. With a smile the Prince turned to the King as he exclaimed, "*Mais elle est charmante!*" The King returned the smile, but deep in his heart he was unhappy about the whole affair.

Clotilde waited a whole day before she made known her decision. At five o'clock in the afternoon of January 18, she said to her father: "I know that from these nuptials a good can come to my country. Since love of country commands it and you desire it, I accept."

The first to offer his best wishes to Princess Clotilde was Count Cavour. Rubbing his hands in characteristic fashion, he grew lyrical as he talked to her about her fiancé. He was the only one who was lyrical. The others at the court observed a painful silence.

That evening Prince Napoleon was honored by a reception and ball given by Count Cavour at his palace. The high society of Turin had all been invited, but very few of the ladies came—only the wives of the diplomats and other functionaries. Cavour was infuriated by the noticeable absences, especially since the Prince had expressed a desire to meet the ladies of Turinese society. Like the aristocracy, Turinese society did not welcome the French prince.

Prince Napoleon was piqued, and ordinarily he would have sulked and stamped out of the place in which he had not been warmly received. But he was trying hard to play the role of the reformed prince. When he learned that an anniversary Mass was to be said in the Castle of Moncalieri to mark the fourth anniversary of the death of Queen Marie Adelaide, he asked the King if he might attend. On being told that it would not be proper for him to attend since the Mass was only for the members of the royal family and he was not yet a member, he arranged to have a Mass said in the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud, at which he and all his cortege were present. If his purpose

were to please or impress Clotilde, he succeeded: in her diary she wrote, "Yesterday the Prince had the goodness to assist at Mass for my mother."

After the Mass at Moncalieri, Clotilde decided it was a good time to tell her brothers and sister of her forthcoming marriage to Prince Napoleon. When she sent for them, all four came bouncing into her apartment. Humbert, now fourteen, and Amedeo, thirteen, sat to her right and left on the divan on which she was sitting. Oddone, twelve, and Maria Pia, eleven, sat on the floor in front of her.

"Well," she began slowly, "I just wanted to tell you that I am to be married soon to Prince Napoleon of France, the cousin of the Emperor."

"Oh, you mean Plon-Plon?" Humbert and Amedeo asked in unison. Then they burst into laughter.

For a moment Clotilde looked at them as if she were shocked, then began laughing with them. Plon-Plon! She had forgotten. It was the Prince's nickname and almost everyone called him that, his friends in affection and his enemies in derision.

The Prince had given the nickname to himself. It had all started one day when he was a baby and was being rocked in the arms of Madame Mère, the famous Grandmother Bonaparte. The Prince had been christened Napoleon, the name Jerome being given to him only after the death of his older brother. The grandmother had been repeating the name Napoleon to the baby and wanted to test his ability to talk. "Beh," she cooed, "tell Grandma now, what is your name?" The baby blurted, "Plon, Plon." And Plon-Plon it remained.

Amedeo and Humbert had heard the Prince called Plon-Plon at the Court of Turin, and the first time they heard it, the name had struck them funny. And now their sister was

to be married to him, to Plon-Plon. The more they thought about it, the harder they laughed.

Clotilde was happy to be able to laugh with them. After her father, here were the ones whom she loved most in the world. With them only she could relax, feel at ease, and laugh. It was part of the price of being a princess that she had to keep her dignity always, and laughter seemed somehow unprincesslike.

When the laughter had subsided, Clotilde happened to look down at Maria Pia and Oddone, and both were crying. Soon she was all solicitude for the two youngest—the two whom she would miss the most when she would be in Paris. Beautiful Maria Pia who wanted to marry a king, not a prince. And the ever sickly Oddone.

She wished she could spend more time with these loved ones, but she told them she would have to return to the Royal Palace—there was so much to be attended to during the next week. Before dismissing them, however, she admonished Amedeo and Humbert, “Remember, now that the Prince is to be married to your sister, no more Plon-Plon, understand?”

And again in unison the two boys chimed, “We understand. We won’t call Plon-Plon, Plon-Plon!”

This laughter, however, indicated in Clotilde more than a readiness to relax. It was part of the almost calculated objectivity with which she viewed Prince Napoleon and her forthcoming marriage to him. She mentioned his name in the entries which she made in her diary during the month of January, 1859, but only in terms of “he went here or there, he did this or that.”

To Countess Marianna di Villamarina, the mother-in-law of her governess and whom Clotilde affectionately called Nonna Pes, she said: “Prince Napoleon has shoul-

ders which are a little high and this gives the appearance that his neck is short, but he has beautiful eyes and teeth, a good and lively face and, above all, he is a man of feeling. I dislike leaving my family, my country, those I love and by whom I am loved; but it is the destiny of us princesses. You won't forget me, Nonna Pes, and I shall come to see you often. The Prince has promised me that I may. However, I want you to write to me often, giving me news of all of you, of all the young women of my own age, and of all my friends."

On January 21 she wrote to Camilla di Foras, her close friend and former assistant governess:

Here it is, I shall be married on Sunday, January 30, to Prince Napoleon, cousin of the Emperor of France. This news will perhaps surprise you, knowing my ideas; but believe me I have given the marriage much thought. I have also prayed, but instead of arresting the marriage, prayer seemed only to advance it. We must therefore say, my dear, that it is the Lord who has willed it.

I assure you that apart from the sorrow of leaving my family and my country, I am very happy.

The Prince is very good and I am sure, in so far as I can be sure, that everything will go well.

Rest assured that although far away, I shall love you much and will continue to write from Paris as I have written from Turin.

I am tranquil, most tranquil, and happy. I say this sincerely since you know how much I love you.

Papà is contented and I am very contented because he is.

The week of January 23, 1859, brought a series of social and religious functions which Prince Napoleon had to attend, and he detested functions—at least the kind held at the Court of Turin. He even detested most of the functions

held at the Tuileries in Paris, preferring his own gatherings of liberals at the Palais-Royal.

On Sunday afternoon, January 23, the marriage proposal was to be made official. In the morning the King received in the green-appointed council room the deputation from the two houses of Parliament who brought him a reply to his recent discourse; so he took the opportunity to make the first public announcement of the engagement of his daughter to Prince Napoleon. "Yes, the year begins well," he told the deputies and senators, "but it will end even better."

At the high Mass in the cathedral Prince Napoleon sat beside King Victor Emmanuel in the royal tribune. Afterwards, there was an assembly in the red-and-gold throne room with its frescoed ceiling depicting "Peace" and its inlaid floor of different kinds of rare woods. The King sat on his canopied throne, surrounded by his aides-de-camp and the Grand Officers of the Crown, to receive General Niel, who was accompanied by his aides-de-camp. In the name of the Emperor of France and of ex-King Jerome Bonaparte, father of Prince Napoleon, the General made a formal request for the hand of Princess Clotilde. In accordance with protocol, however, neither the Prince nor the Princess was present.

At three in the afternoon the royal family attended services in the cathedral. It was packed, for after the regular Sunday afternoon sermon the banns of matrimony between His Imperial Highness Jerome Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul and Her Royal Highness Clotilde Maria Teresa Luisa were to be announced. A smiling Clotilde and a satisfied Prince Napoleon sat together in the royal tribune during the sermon and the reading of the banns of their marriage.

A sumptuous banquet was held that evening in the Gallery of Daniel in the Royal Palace. Seated next to Prince

Napoleon, Clotilde felt at peace: at least she experienced no revulsion toward him as she had feared from the rumors she had heard of his corpulency and the etchings of dissipation in his face. Now she noticed only his raven black hair meticulously combed, his well-kept teeth; and she caught the soft, tender phrases which he let fall whenever he turned to her. She knew there was no love between them; but someone who understood what love is had said, where there is no love, put love and love will be there. . . .

From the banquet hall the King and his guests went to the Royal Theater, which was brilliant with lighted candles and perfumed with flowers. The Princess made her entrance arm in arm with her fiancé, followed by the King, Maria Pia, Humbert, Amedeo, and Prince Eugene of Carignano. Applause and cries of "*Viva the King*" rang through the theater as the royal family proceeded to the royal box. Having registered their protest to the French prince on the night of his arrival by their absence at his first appearance in the Royal Theater, the aristocracy had now come en masse to honor their King and Princess. The drama for the occasion was *Robert the Devil*; and Clotilde must have enjoyed the performance, for in her diary she referred to it as a "truly beautiful and imposing sight."

On the next evening, January 24, a grand ball was held in the Royal Palace. Besides the aristocracy, the members of Turinese society had been invited. Having registered their protest by their absence at the reception given by Cavour, the Turinese socialites now came to honor the princess whom they dearly loved.

In the ballroom the low-hanging crystal chandeliers with their hundreds of lighted candles sparkled the brilliants on the heads, the necks, and the hands of the ladies in décolleté gowns. Clotilde's gown was white, décolleté like the others, which accentuated her graceful shoulders. She wore

diamonds in her hair, at the tips of her ears, and around her neck. The only flash of color was the green from the magnificent ring of emeralds and diamonds which Prince Napoleon had presented to her that afternoon, a gift of Empress Eugénie of France.

The ball opened with a quadrille of honor. As Princess Clotilde danced with Prince Napoleon, some of the ladies on the side lines whispered to one another that notwithstanding his fleshiness and his age, the Prince danced with grace and ease. Clotilde danced only twice after the opening dance, since most of her evening was spent in presenting guests to her fiancé.

Still smarting under the rebuffs he had received, the Prince was inclined to withdraw when he saw a group coming toward him and Clotilde. But the unperturbed Princess said quietly to him, "Come, stay, this is necessary. Moreover, it will make me happy." Already the young Princess sensed that she was going to have a difficult husband on her hands.

Count Cavour too was among the dancers on the ball-room floor, his first partner being Madame Lannoye, the wife of the Belgian minister. But before long, the Prime Minister of Sardinia abandoned dancing for politics, speaking now with one diplomat, now with another, and paying special attention to General Niel and to the ministers of France and England. The minister of Austria-Hungary, having paid his respects to the guests of honor and to the King, participated in one or two dances and then departed. His departure was noticed, and several of the more discerning guests whispered, "War is not far off."

The official signing of the contract of marriage took place on the next afternoon, January 25, in the Hall of the Blesseds, so called because on its walls hang paintings of the

members of the House of Savoy who have been beatified by the Church. It had always been one of Clotilde's favorite rooms and many times as a child she had sat in the room, thinking to herself that it is possible to become a saint even though one lives in a castle or palace. On this afternoon, however, her thoughts were mostly on the serious business she was witnessing. General Niel had given her a letter from ex-King Jerome Bonaparte officially asking her consent to the marriage with his son. Now, Count Cavour, as prime minister and president of the King's council, was functioning as notary for the Crown. The hall was full—the Cavaliers of the Order of the Annunciation in their colorful uniforms, the ladies in waiting of the palace, the cortege of Prince Napoleon, Clotilde's brothers and sister, Prince Eugene of Carignano.

Two of the important items in the nuptial contract were the bride's dowry and the bridegroom's settlement. Clotilde was to receive from her father a large sum of money in addition to jewels and other goods. On his part, Prince Napoleon stipulated that he would give his wife a collection of jewels, an annual income, and a large inheritance in the event of his death.

The last official reception was held on January 26, this one being for the ladies of the court, whom Clotilde received in her own apartment. Prince Napoleon took the occasion to ask Countess Villamarina to accompany Clotilde to Paris and remain with her until her new court could be formed. He had already given Clotilde permission to bring with her to Paris several others—her personal maid, a male servant, and two *valets de chambre*.

On Thursday, January 27, Clotilde visited the Castle of Moncalieri for the last time before her marriage. The purpose was, in her own words, "to say good-bye to my dear brother Oddone and to the town where I passed so many

happy years of my life." The ailing Oddone clung to his sister's neck as she promised to write to him from Paris. "Kekina," he kept pleading, "I don't want you to leave." Clotilde wept with him. Laughter and tears were the two emotional luxuries she could permit herself only when she was with her brothers and sister in private. Even with her father she felt that she had to maintain her dignity.

January 28 was a comparatively quiet day for Clotilde. She received informally a deputation from the city of Turin and her father's staff. Then, feeling the need of prayer, she went to the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation, where she unexpectedly met Canon Gazelli, who gave her his blessing. On her return to the palace, Count Nigra brought her some family jewels and Countess Villamarina showed her the laces which she was to receive as an inheritance from her mother. Everything around her reminded her of the proximity of her marriage.

On Saturday morning, January 29, Clotilde and Maria Pia attended Mass at the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation. The church was filled, since the people had known that Clotilde was coming. After the Mass the crowds surged around her, giving her assurances of their affection. Clotilde was visibly moved as she left this church in which she had prayed so often, for many years with her grandmother and mother, then with Maria Pia or by herself.

Concerning her visit to the sanctuary and to the other activities of the day, she wrote in her diary:

This morning Maria and I went to hear Mass at the Sanctuary of La Consolata, to ask the Mother of heaven for her blessing on my marriage. I was deeply moved by the demonstration of affection shown by the crowds. Then dinner with my brothers. At three o'clock we all descended to the gala apartments to assist at the reading of the act of my marriage. The ladies of the

court and all gentlemen who have the title of *Excellency* assisted. There was also the Military Staff, a most imposing sight. After I affixed my signature, I conversed with the ladies. Prince Napoleon presented to me Monsieur Bojuge Chancourtois, his secretary in the Cabinet, who had just arrived from Paris.

This was the last time that Clotilde wrote in her diary. Tomorrow she would open a new door in her life.

That night Piazza Castello, Via Nuova, Piazza San Carlo, and other streets in Turin were brilliantly illuminated; and thousands of Turinese celebrated with wine and song. Tomorrow would be the wedding day of a princess dearly loved by her people.



WEDDING AT TURIN

Princess Clotilde and Prince Napoleon were married on Sunday morning, January 30, 1859, in the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud. At ten o'clock Archbishop Alessandro d'Augennes of Vercelli, assisted by the Archbishop of Turin and four bishops, celebrated a low Mass at which Clotilde received Holy Communion. Since Prince Napoleon was at best an agnostic, he remained standing with his hands behind his back throughout the Mass.

Clotilde's face was whiter than the white satin-and-lace gown which she was wearing, and while making her thanksgiving she seemed oblivious of Prince Napoleon's restlessness or of the whispers in the royal tribune. She tried not to analyze her feelings, as though analysis would be a betrayal of the trust which she had placed in God to carry her through an ordeal that was beyond her understanding, beyond her fortitude.

When she heard the Archbishop of Vercelli begin the interrogations of the marriage ceremony, she lifted her head in attention.

But the man beside her, who in a few moments would be her husband, was distracted. He was studying the ba-

roque architecture of the circular chapel, its magnificent cupola, the white marble statues gleaming in their niches in the black marble walls, the casket-like reliquary of the Holy Shroud sentineled by four gilt angels above the altar. He knew that four princes of the House of Savoy were entombed in the niches, but what was in the mysterious casket?

He was jerked from his reverie by a slight pull at his sleeve. It was Canon Gazelli, who was whispering something in his ear. The Archbishop had asked: Will His Imperial Highness Jerome Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul take Her Royal Highness Clotilde Maria Teresa Luisa as his lawfully wedded wife?

The Prince seemed irritated as he answered, "*Ah—certainement, oui, oui.*"

Why, of course, he wanted to take Princess Clotilde of Savoy as his wife. What a stupid question!

He returned to his inspection of the chapel, this time riveting his attention on the black marble floor, inlaid with eight-pointed golden stars.

Again the pull at his sleeve and the whispering of Canon Gazelli. "Your Highness, the ring!"

"*Oui, oui.*"

But Clotilde's "*Oui, Monseigneur*" had been clear and firm. All her life she would be like that—whatever had to be given would be given wholly, generously; whatever could not be given would be denied vigorously, completely.

As the bridal couple turned to leave the chapel, King Victor Emmanuel, who had stood close by and observed Prince Napoleon's conduct, was visibly upset. Turning to Canon Gazelli, he asked in a voice which was both irritated and concerned, "Are these two really married?"

"Your Majesty, I hope so," replied the Canon.

The Princess too turned to Canon Gazelli with a question mark in her eyes, but a smile and a nod from him seemed to reassure her.

Immediately after the ceremony, the bride with her husband and father went out into one of the balconies of the Royal Palace to wave to the crowds who had gathered in the courtyard. Shouts of "Viva the King" and "Viva Princess Clotilde" rang out in the crisp January air. Even as the husband of their Princess, Prince Napoleon knew that he was not acceptable to the people of Turin. Then luncheon was served to the royal family and the other intimates who were to accompany the bride and bridegroom to Genoa.

At one o'clock in the afternoon Clotilde, now the Imperial Princess of Savoy-Napoleon, began to say her good-byes to relatives and members of the royal household. Humbert and Amedeo were manly and shed no tears; but when Clotilde kissed Maria Pia, both had tears in their eyes.

As Clotilde and Prince Napoleon, followed by the party who were to accompany them to Genoa, came out the main door they found a double row of national guardsmen extending to the wrought-iron fence which fronted the Royal Palace. Outside were ten carriages awaiting them. Into the first carriage stepped Clotilde and her husband, her father, and Prince Eugene of Carignano—the bridal couple taking the front seats and the King and Prince Eugene, the back ones. Escorted by uniformed *carabinieri* on horseback, the ten carriages proceeded slowly to the railroad station at Porta Nuova. Crowds along the way applauded and shouted, "*Viva il Re Galantuomo*, Long live the Honest King"—and this epithet, which the people always used when they were particularly pleased with their sovereign, eased the weight in Victor Emmanuel's heart.

At the station, crowds awaited to see their Princess wrapped in a velvet cloak with a matching bonnet that had satin ribbons tied in a bow under her chin.

The chartered train stopped at Moncalieri, Asti, Alessandria, and Novi long enough to satisfy the crowds who clamored to see Princess Clotilde.

When the train arrived at Genoa, it was raining. And the superstitious in the waiting crowd said it was a bad omen for the bride.

Arrangements had been made to spend the night at the Royal Palace in Genoa. A wedding banquet in the palace and a grand spectacle at the Theater Charles Felix continued the wedding festivities. When Clotilde and her husband appeared in the royal box, she was given a standing ovation. Some had paid over two hundred dollars for their seats. It was after midnight when Princess Clotilde and Prince Napoleon retired to their apartment in the Royal Palace of Genoa. . . .

The next morning, when the Princess emerged from her bedroom, she threw her arms around Countess Villamarina, who was going with her to Paris, and whispered that she was trusting in God. The Countess noticed that the face of the Princess was flushed.

As the bridal couple went down the grand marble staircase from their apartment to the main hall below, to the guests awaiting them, several in the group remarked that the Princess who the night before had been smiling, almost gay, now looked withdrawn. In returning their salutation, she lowered her eyes as if the thought of having spent the night with a man she scarcely knew were now an embarrassment to her.

But whatever timidity or embarrassment she had felt that morning disappeared as she and her husband mounted a carriage which took them sightseeing in Genoa. And at the

grand ball that evening at the Royal Palace, Clotilde was again mistress of herself, again living that code of *noblesse oblige* which had been hers from as far back as she could remember.

It was not until the next day, February 1, that Clotilde and Prince Napoleon prepared to leave Genoa by boat for Marseilles. Because the sea was rough, someone suggested that they leave on one of the two vessels of war which were then in port instead of on the yacht *La Reine Hortense*; but Prince Napoleon would not hear of having his bride make the journey in a vessel of war. In spite of the bad weather, the King and the others accompanied the couple to their yacht. King Victor Emmanuel kept biting his mustache nervously, and the ladies wept openly. Clotilde alone was calm and smiling. Only when the yacht began to move from its moorings did the King trust himself to say good-bye to his daughter.

The yacht *La Reine Hortense* arrived on February 2 at Marseilles, where Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde were welcomed by representatives of the Emperor and Empress of France.

From Marseilles they were escorted all the way to Fontainebleau, thirty-five miles southeast of Paris, to the Palace of Fontainebleau. When they entered the Courtyard of the White Horse in front of the palace, Clotilde remembered that it was precisely in this courtyard that Emperor Napoleon I had bid his men farewell after his first abdication. At the top of the horseshoe staircase, Clotilde met for the first time her father-in-law, ex-King Jerome, and her sister-in-law, Princess Matilde. The two Bonapartes had come out the door of the palace when they saw the carriages entering the courtyard.

The old King received Clotilde like a father welcoming a

long-absent daughter. "My dearest child," he said, and he bent down to kiss her forehead as Clotilde loosened the ribbons under her chin to let the bonnet slip back on her shoulders.

When Prince Napoleon presented his sister, Clotilde saw before her a statuesque woman, masculine in stance, with the sharp features of a Corsican. The Bonaparte Princess embraced Clotilde impetuously but underneath the embrace Clotilde sensed the frigidity. After releasing Clotilde from her embrace, Matilde turned to her brother with a quizzical look as if to say, "How could you?" The brother and sister laughed as they exchanged pleasantries, giving the impression that they were on the best of terms. But all at the Court of Paris knew that Matilde was constantly annoyed with her brother and that the only thing the two had in common was their strong dislike of Empress Eugénie.

Princess Matilde had been curious to meet the innocent young princess whom her profligate brother had married. She had first heard of the marriage proposal during one of the biweekly soirees she held in her salon at Rue de Courcelles at which Flaubert, De Maupassant, Sainte-Beuve, Littré, Gautier, Dumas *père* and *fils*, Taine, Mérimée, the De Goncourt brothers, Pasteur, and other artists, writers, scientists, and philosophers bandied their witticisms like players on a tennis court. Matilde had guffawed, "Clotilde and Plon-Plon—it will be like putting the devil into holy water!"

Matilde wondered how long the marriage would last. Probably no longer than hers to the Russian Prince Anatole Demidoff. But the manner of the breakup would be different. She would never forget that night—the glittering reception in their palace when in a fit of jealousy Anatole slapped her in front of the hundreds of guests. Neither would she forget the next morning, when she walked out

of their palace, never to return. . . . There would be no such explosive breakup of the marriage between her brother and this sweet young thing. Their marriage would die like a fire going out from lack of fuel to sustain it.

Princess Matilde and ex-King Jerome gave Clotilde an abbreviated tour of the Palace of Fontainebleau. As a member of the imperial family she would come here as guest with her husband, at least when Prince Napoleon was in the mood to forget his antagonism to the Empress and to accept the invitation of the Emperor for whom he had a real affection in spite of their political disagreements.

From her knowledge of French history, Clotilde recognized the rooms that were being shown to her—the apartment of Madame de Maintenon; the apartment in which Pope Pius VII had been held prisoner by Napoleon I; the bedroom with the exotic Turkish boudoir which had once been Marie Antoinette's. Empress Eugénie now used the ill-fated Queen's apartment whenever she came to Fontainebleau; but it was said that the superstitious Eugénie was obsessed with the fear that, like Marie Antoinette's, her end would be tragic.

Clotilde and Prince Napoleon arrived in Paris on the afternoon of February 3, accompanied by ex-King Jerome, Princess Matilde, and a large cortege. The principal streets of Paris—Rue de Lyon, Rue Saint-Lazare, Rue de Rivoli, Place Saint-Germain, l'Auxerrois, the Carrousel—had been decorated; and large crowds gathered at windows and on the streets to watch the carriages proceeding to the Palace of the Tuileries. Paris's welcome for Clotilde was as silent as Turin's welcome for Prince Napoleon, but for a different reason. The Turinese had objected to Prince Napoleon because they did not think he would make a fitting husband for their princess. The Parisians did not object to Princess

Clotilde but to the war which they sensed would soon follow as a consequence of the new alliance between France and Italy.

When the carriages reached the Tuileries, Prince Napoleon helped Clotilde dismount and then led her into the palace, to the foot of the marble stairway where the Emperor of France, smoking his perennial cigarette, was waiting. Throwing away his cigarette, he came forward with extended hands to welcome her. It was the first time the two had seen each other.

Clotilde made her curtsy before the Emperor. "Sire, the honor is all mine," she said smilingly.

The Emperor then took Princess Clotilde by the hand as he led her up the staircase of honor, at the top of which stood Empress Eugénie and her court. For a moment Clotilde was bewildered by the spectacle of ladies in multi-colored crinolines, and by the brilliants shining from their heads, necks, and wrists. She was somewhat discomforted when she noted the headdress curls caught at the back of the head or curls hanging to the shoulders, so unlike her own simple coiffure. The Empress stood in their midst like a large diamond surrounded by smaller brilliants in a brooch.

The Empress stepped forward with outstretched arms, clasping Clotilde before she could make her curtsy. "Madame," the Empress said, "you are welcome to the Imperial Court."

The Empress had been curious to see the Princess of Savoy, and her first appraisal was that she had nothing to fear from this simple young girl—she would be no rival to the beauty and splendor of the Empress of France. Yes, Eugénie reflected, Clotilde was an authentic princess, belonging to the oldest royal house reigning in Europe, while she had been only a countess, the Countess of Montijo, be-

fore she married the Emperor. The French had never quite forgiven the Emperor for marrying her and they still referred to her as "the Spaniard" in much the same way in which they had referred to Marie Antoinette as "the Austrian." But if she had feared the coming of Clotilde to the Imperial Court, Eugénie's fears were allayed now that she had seen for herself this girl who was not yet sixteen. Not only did the Empress not fear being displaced by the newcomer; she immediately assumed a kind of condescending solicitude as if to say, you poor little girl, you must be overwhelmed by the magnificence and pace of the Court of Paris.

Soon after the arrival at the Tuileries, a reception was held during which the Empress presented the official guests to Princess Clotilde. Whether from genuine thoughtfulness or from a sense of feigned solicitude, the Empress turned to Clotilde before all the guests had been presented and said with a honeyed smile, "My dear, perhaps this is too tiring for you. If you wish, you may omit the customary reception of the functionaries."

Clotilde returned the smile but her words were not honey to the Empress of France. "You forget, Madame," Clotilde said quietly, "that I was born at the Court and that I have been accustomed to these functions from my childhood."

Late that night Clotilde was conducted to what was to be her new residence, the Palais-Royal, originally built by Cardinal Richelieu after he became Chancellor of France. In one wing of the palace now lived ex-King Jerome, and in another wing two apartments had been prepared, one for Prince Napoleon and the other for Princess Clotilde.

On her arrival at the Palais-Royal, Clotilde found the ladies of her new court awaiting her: Madame Hortense Thayer, Countess Bertrand, Baroness de la Roncière le

Nourry, and Madame de Clermont-Tonnerre. The ladies made their curtsies to their new mistress, then conducted her to a room which contained a surprise for Clotilde. Her father-in-law had converted one of the rooms into a private chapel for her. This was something she had never allowed herself to expect.

When she retired to her own apartment, which had been redecorated in blue, Clotilde fell asleep in the anticipation that every morning there would be Mass in her own home and that under the same roof with her she would always have Christ in His sacramental presence. Her father-in-law seemed happy, and her husband was all courtesy and attention. It was far, far more than she had hoped for.

Three days after her arrival in Paris, Princess Clotilde attended the opening session of the French General Assembly. Seated next to her sister-in-law, Princess Matilde, she heard the Emperor of France refer to her marriage in these words: "The happy union of my beloved cousin Napoleon with the daughter of King Victor Emmanuel II is not one of these extraordinary facts for which it is necessary to seek a hidden reason; it is the natural consequence of the community of interests between two nations and of the friendship between two sovereigns."

No one in that assembly applauded.

If Clotilde wondered at the ominous silence, it was because she did not realize the imminence of war, a war which was only waiting for some pretext to justify it. She did not know that Count Cavour, on the day before her marriage, had written to Count Villamarina, "And now that the nuptials have been completed, let us think of beginning the war."

The war had virtually begun over ten years ago, in the Year of Revolutions in Italy, France, and Austria. . . .



AUSTRIAN WAR AND PYRRHIC VICTORY

On January 12, 1848, the first revolution of that year of revolutions had broken out in Sicily. Soon after, there were uprisings in other parts of Italy, in Paris, in Vienna. The French Revolution overthrew France's "citizen king," Louis Philippe, and established the Second French Republic. King Charles Albert of Sardinia granted a constitution at Turin, and Pope Pius IX approved a form of limited monarchy for the Papal States. Everywhere in central Europe liberalism and nationalism were on the move.

The Congress of Vienna in 1815 had made Austria dominant in Italy, giving the northern provinces of Lombardy and Venetia to the Austrian Emperor, and the smaller central states of Tuscany, Parma, and Modena to other Habsburgs. Nearly all the rest of Italy had been divided among three sovereigns—the House of Savoy ruling in Sardinia and Piedmont, the Pope in the Papal States, and the Bourbons in Naples and Sicily.

The Viennese uprising of 1848 gave new fire to the torch of nationalism in northern Italy, and the Venetians and

Lombards appealed to King Charles Albert to help them drive out the Austrians. With a small force of fifteen thousand men the King and his two sons—Victor Emmanuel II, then Duke of Savoy, and Ferdinand, Duke of Genoa—fought bravely; but their army was defeated at Custoza by the vastly superior Austrian army under Marshal Radetsky.

The next year, because of quarrels in his cabinet as to the best means of expelling the Austrians and of promoting Italian unity, King Charles Albert decided to try again the fortunes of war. Although he and his two sons fought valiantly, the Piedmontese army was again defeated, this time at Novara. It was at this time and on this battlefield that King Charles Albert abdicated in favor of his son Victor Emmanuel II. Victor Emmanuel was only twenty-nine years old but he already gave signs of that ability which was to make him the first king of united Italy. Before he left the battlefield of Novara—the battlefield on which he had received his father's abdication—he vowed, "But Italy shall be!"

However, before the Italy envisioned by Victor Emmanuel could be realized, there were to be ten more years of dreaming and work, of diplomacy and the circumstances of destiny.

Alone of all the Italian rulers, Victor Emmanuel II retained a constitution—the one granted by his father in 1848; and in the eyes of all patriots he gained favor by doing so in the face of persistent Austrian protests. He was, moreover, personally popular: he was *il Re Galantuomo*. All Italy looked hopefully to the small state of Piedmont in the northwest which was being liberally ruled by "the Honest King."

While Victor Emmanuel dreamed and worked for the unification of all Italians under one ruler, another man at his side used the powers of diplomacy to turn the circum-

stances of destiny to good advantage. That man was his Prime Minister, Count Camillo Benso di Cavour.

Cavour's first significant step in foreign policy was to convince King Victor Emmanuel that Sardinia should join France and Great Britain in going to the aid of Turkey in the Crimean War. As a result Sardinia gained the sympathy of liberals all over Western Europe; and at the Peace Congress of Paris in 1856, which Cavour attended, he had the opportunity to denounce Austrian rule in Italy.

Cavour's next significant step was to strengthen the alliance between Sardinia and France, knowing that without French assistance the Italians could not drive out the Austrians. The circumstances of destiny had placed Napoleon III in power in France, and he was a man who had a number of practical reasons for being interested in the Italian cause. The Bonapartes had Italian blood in their veins; in his younger days Napoleon III had participated in revolutionary activities in Italy. Moreover, he felt that a war to secure Italian liberation from Austrian rule would be popular with French liberals and France could also get some tangible compensation for its help.

At the meeting between Emperor Napoleon III and Count Cavour held at Plombières on July 21, 1858, one of the conditions laid down was that the war between Italy and Austria have a cause which would appear to justify French intervention. Three months after the marriage of Princess Clotilde and Prince Napoleon, the King of Sardinia and the Emperor of France had their "cause" for a defensive war against Austria.

Alarmed by the mobilizations in Piedmont, by the parades and speeches, by slogans such as "Italians, free yourselves of foreign tyranny! Long live the red shirts of Garibaldi! Italy united under Victor Emmanuel and the House of Savoy!" Austria sent Piedmont an ultimatum—either

demobilize in three days or your country will be invaded. King Victor Emmanuel received the ultimatum at Turin on Holy Saturday, April 23, 1859. Piedmont refused the ultimatum, and the war for which Victor Emmanuel II had waited ten years was now only three days away.

As the white-uniformed Austrian soldiers marched west into Venetia and Lombardy, the Piedmontese soldiers, waving the red, white, and green banners of Savoy, began to march east to meet the enemy. To the aid of the Piedmontese army came the bearded, red-shirted Garibaldians from other parts of Italy and the imperial forces from France.

In France the Emperor and Prince Napoleon prepared to leave for the battlefield. Even more than the Emperor, Prince Napoleon was interested in the Italian cause. A rebel by nature, he was in sympathy with revolutionaries in every part of Europe. It was his extreme republicanism which had caused much of the political friction between him and his cousin the Emperor.

On May 1 a farewell party was held at the Tuileries for the Emperor and Prince Napoleon. As Clotilde watched the Emperor and her husband go from group to group saying good-bye and receiving expressions of good wishes, her one preoccupation was the hope that the war would not last long. It was not for her to decide the rightness or wrongness of a cause for war, but she felt comforted in the thought that the Emperor and her husband were going to the aid of her father and her countrymen.

On May 17 the Empress and Princess Clotilde accompanied the Emperor and Prince Napoleon to Montereau for their departure to Italy. Although the French people did not want war, especially a war which they felt was not their own, they rallied to the support of the Emperor once

he had declared that he would head the French troops in Italy. Crowds lined both sides of Rue de Rivoli as the imperial carriages, escorted by the military, passed by on their way to Montereau.

At the port of Montereau the Empress calmly embraced the Emperor to bid him good-bye. Clotilde clung to her husband and the thought that she might never again see alive this man whom she would not have married under ordinary circumstances made her realize that she wanted him to come back—and that she would miss his thoughtfulness, his gentleness with her during the three and a half months they had lived together as husband and wife.

After their husbands had embarked, the Empress and Clotilde returned to their homes—the Empress to be regent of the empire and to watch over her three-year-old son, the Prince Imperial; and Clotilde to spend her time in prayer and charitable works. Much of Clotilde's time was spent at the Monastery of Saint Peter Fourier at the corner of Rue de Sèvres and the Boulevard des Invalides. In that monastery of Canonesses of Saint Augustine, popularly referred to as the Monastery des Oiseaux, was Prince Napoleon's half sister, Sister Marie of the Cross.

The Empress settled down with the Prince Imperial and a small suite at the Palace of Saint-Cloud in a residential suburb of Paris, and there she lived in retirement. She presided over the weekly cabinet meeting held at Saint-Cloud, and in the evenings joined the ladies of her court in making bandages for the wounded. She and Clotilde anxiously awaited the first news of the war. They had to wait almost three weeks.

The Emperor launched his first attack on June 4, at Magenta in Lombardy. The Austrians fought furiously but by evening the Emperor's generals had won the battle, and on the next afternoon the Empress received a telegram from

the Emperor. As Clotilde and the others gathered fearfully around Eugénie, she read in a quivering voice: "Here are the results, as far as we know, of the Battle of Magenta: at least seven thousand prisoners, some twenty thousand Austrians disabled, three cannons and two flags taken. Our losses are about three thousand men killed. Today the army is resting and reorganizing."

At eight o'clock in the evening salvos of artillery informed the Parisians that their army had been victorious. An hour later Eugénie and Clotilde rode in an open carriage along the illuminated grand boulevards and the Rue de Rivoli to receive the acclamations of a people dizzy with the wine of victory. Everywhere the French and Sardinian flags mingled as they fluttered in the night breeze, as if to emphasize the symbol of their alliance.

Two days later, a solemn *Te Deum* was sung in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Seated on a velvet-canopied platform in the center of the nave sat the Empress, ex-King Jerome Bonaparte, Princess Clotilde, and Princess Matilde while the crowds, who were unable to find room within the cathedral, pressed at the three portals in the hope of getting a glimpse of the colorful ceremony. Princess Clotilde, even more than the Empress, was the cynosure of all eyes. For many this was the first opportunity to observe the young bride at closer range. But Clotilde seemed oblivious of all the attention. Something else seemed to preoccupy her. She was glad of the victory—glad for the sake of her country, her father, her husband. Prince Napoleon was at the head of the Fifth Army Corps and she could image the flush of victory on his face, hear the exultations of his men. But deeper within herself she could also image the blood-stained shakos, knapsacks, muskets, cloaks, tunics of the dead; and she could hear the shrieks of the dying as priests walked among them with the Viaticum. She was one of those

whose temperament will never let them be completely at ease in their own well-being so long as their deeper selves remember the sufferings and pains of the multitude which no man can number. . . .

Less than three weeks after the victory at Magenta another telegram of victory reached Saint-Cloud. The Empress was in bed when it was handed to her. Nervously she tore open the envelope but the first line calmed her as she continued to read: "Great fight and great victory. The Austrian army has surrendered. The line of battle stretched along for five leagues. We carried all their positions and have taken many guns, flags, and prisoners. The battle lasted from eight in the morning until eight at night." The Empress arose, dressed, dispatched a message to Princess Clotilde, then went outside to inform the sentinels and the troops of the victories at San Martino and Solferino.

On the next morning, June 25, the cannons of the Invalides again coded the message of victory to a jubilant Paris; and again Clotilde went to her chapel to thank God for the victory and to ask His mercy on the victims of war.

Sunday, July 3, 1859, was a beautifully mild day in Paris, an ideal day for the public celebration of the victories at San Martino and Solferino. There was to be a parade to the Cathedral of Notre Dame, then the solemn *Te Deum*. The Empress had decided to take the Prince Imperial with her to the ceremony.

In the open carriage, at the side of the Empress, sat the Prince Imperial, Napoleon Eugene Louis, in a white piqué suit with a blue sash. In the opposite seat sat Princess Clotilde and Princess Matilde. Surrounding the landau as it proceeded slowly from the Tuileries to Notre Dame, officers in colorful uniforms rode on freshly groomed steeds. The shower of nosegays and flowers which fell into the imperial carriage, as it passed by the crowds, delighted the

Prince Imperial, and he kept clapping his tiny hands. Clotilde sat calmly, with her hands joined on her lap. She saw the lines of worry on the Empress's beautiful face. This was a parade of triumph, of rejoicing; but only a child like the Prince Imperial could feel unalloyed delight because only his delight could not be alloyed by the sobering reflections of adulthood.

At the threshold of the cathedral, the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris and his clergy awaited the Empress, who entered the central portal holding the Prince Imperial by the hand. Then the trumpets sounded for the ceremony to begin.

On leaving the cathedral, the Empress was offered a magnificent bouquet of flowers and a crown of golden laurels with pearl clasps. The return to the Tuileries was a continuous ovation. All Paris was shouting that the war was over and that soon their brothers and sons and husbands would be returning and life in the gay capital could continue from where it had never left off.

On the day that the *Te Deum* was sung in thanksgiving for the victories of San Martino and Solferino, the Emperor, who had just crossed the Mincio River, was joined by Prince Napoleon at the head of his men. The Prince, fired by success, was ready to proceed into Tuscany, to Florence, where a bloodless revolution had already proclaimed in favor of the King of Sardinia. Not so the Emperor. He had decided to proceed no further in the bloody business of war.

Things were progressing much more quickly and radically than the Emperor had bargained for at Plombières. Instead of a Kingdom of Northern Italy stretching from the Alps west to the Adriatic, the King of Sardinia would

soon have the entire peninsula; and France would have a formidable power at her own frontiers. The unitarian idea was growing fast in Italy and it now appeared almost impossible to stop it. Already there were signs in Parma, Modena, and Romagna that the people were ready to declare for the King of Sardinia. Moreover, the Austrians had evacuated the whole of central Italy, falling back on their strong fortresses in Venetia; and there was talk of stripping the Pope of all his temporal power, something which Empress Eugénie would never sanction and which would alienate the Catholics in France. Lastly, the Empress had sent the Emperor the alarming news that Prussia had begun to mobilize.

Apart from these motives, Napoleon III was war-weary. He and his soldiers were out of humor as a result of the marches and fighting during the scorching days and stifling nights in the valley of the Mincio. He had been shocked by the gruesome sights he had seen when he visited the battlefields after his victories at Magenta and Solferino: the wounded in all stages of agony, men dying of gangrene on the very spot where they had fallen because there were so few doctors and little medical supplies.

Napoleon III could not bring himself to continue the war. He summoned General Fleury and entrusted him with a letter to Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria in which he proposed a cessation of hostilities. Then, without previously informing Cavour, the Emperor of France and the Emperor of Austria met at Villafranca di Verona at nine o'clock on the morning of July 11, 1859, to negotiate the terms of peace. This preliminary meeting was followed by another in the afternoon, at which Prince Napoleon, acting in behalf of the French Emperor, formulated the final terms of the treaty: Lombardy was to be ceded to Sardinia but

Venetia was to remain Austrian; the princes in central Italy were to be reinstated; an Italian federation was to be formed, of which the Pope was to be president.

King Victor Emmanuel was surprised and disappointed at the unexpected turn of events but he tried to conceal his vexation, perhaps half sensing that through carefully planned plebiscites he would secure what he had expected to win through a prolongation of the war. But Cavour was so angry that instead of rubbing his hands together as he always did before a new challenge, he threw them up in denunciation of the King's acquiescence and resigned his office. Before tendering his resignation, however, Cavour had a stormy session with the King.

In vain did Victor Emmanuel try for two hours to make Cavour understand that if they wanted to keep the good will of the French Emperor, they would have to accept his terms. Cavour remained adamant and finally exclaimed, "Then, Sire, abdicate!"

It was now the King's turn to become furious and he shouted back, "Keep still! Remember that I am the King!"

"No," retorted the Prime Minister, "the real king in this moment is I!"

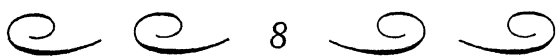
"You, the King! You are nothing but an insolent." With that, King Victor Emmanuel left the room, slamming the door behind him. . . .

Knowing that the French Emperor was capable of joining with Austria to crush him if he refused the terms of Villafranca, the King of Sardinia decided that what he could not avoid he would submit to with dignity. He affixed his signature to the treaty, saying, "I accept for what concerns myself"; in other words, he accepted the cession of Lombardy but reserved the question of the central Italian states for their own consideration.

Meanwhile Clotilde, anxiously awaiting word of her

husband's return, was at Meudon, a suburb southwest of Paris, in the château originally built by King Louis XVI for the Dauphin but now the property of ex-King Jerome. From Meudon she had written to her sister-in-law, Sister Marie of the Cross: "Papà [her father-in-law] is wonderful to me and I love him very much. I am impatiently waiting for Napoleon to return; it seems that he is well."

When she received word that the Emperor and Prince Napoleon would return to France on the morning of July 17, she hastened back to the Palais-Royal to take up again her normal life in the Paris of the Second Empire.



IN PARIS UNDER THE SECOND EMPIRE

The Paris of 1860, thanks to Baron Georges Eugène Haussmann, one of the great city planners in history, was very much like the beautiful Paris of today—the city of wide boulevards and macadamized roads, of the Louvre and the Opera House, of the formal gardens of the Tuileries. What the Paris of today does not have is the Palace of the Tuileries, which was situated in the center of the capital and lit night after night for the sumptuous entertainments of the imperial court of Napoleon III.

To that court came not only sovereigns with their trains, the nobility from most of the nations of Europe, and visitors from the United States; there also came the French avant-gardists in science, philosophy, art, literature, and the theater. Only the extremists—like the authors of *Madame Bovary* and *Fleurs du mal*, who offended the moral sensibilities of the Empress—were not welcome. Although a pupil of Stendhal and Mérimée, the Empress was no patron of Flaubert and Baudelaire. The other *personae non gratae* at the Imperial Court were those who attacked the

person or policies of the Emperor; for example, Victor Hugo, who referred to Napoleon III as "a man captivated by the noise, the glitter and the glamor of power, one whose taste is for spangles, feathers, and embroidery." But many of those unwelcome at the Tuileries were doubly welcomed in the salons of Princess Matilde and of Prince Napoleon. The habitués of Princess Matilde's salons frequented also the informal and often noisy sessions at the Palais-Royal.

The two persons, however, whose ideas and personalities made the greatest impact on Prince Napoleon were Ernest Renan and George Sand. Ernest Renan was a young man, still in his thirties, who had not yet published his controversial biography of Christ; but George Sand was now in her fifties and a little subdued for a woman whose liaisons with Jules Sandeau, Chopin, and Musset had been a sensation even in a Paris that merely winked at promiscuous love and marital infidelity.

Paris during the Second Empire was also the city of the Comédie Française, of the cancan, and of actresses whose amours were notorious. It was on these amours that Charles Dickens commented somewhat euphemistically, "Virgins are not usually found in the French theaters." Heinrich Heine, the German poet and critic, was more blunt in his comment: "All pretty actresses here have their fixed price and those who are *à prix fixe* are indubitably the dearest. Nearly all the young ones are kept by spendthrifts or rich parvenus."

All this loose morality was one of the effects of the so-called Enlightenment. It was a time of "polite agnosticism," resulting from the new interest in archaeology and anthropology, and from the publication of such revolutionary books as the *Communist Manifesto* and *Origin of Species*. Faith, even the vague deism of the eighteenth century, was

despised. The intellectuals, who frequented the great literary salons and academies and who wrote for periodicals like the *Revue des deux mondes*, were agnostics or atheists. Even the average bourgeois father, who insisted on religion in his daughters, thought of it as something disgraceful in his sons. Prince Napoleon was a typical intellectual of his time, except that his morals were, perhaps, a little worse. . . .

At first the anomaly of her new life seemed not to disturb Clotilde. After his return from the Italian war, Prince Napoleon continued to be all attention and consideration toward her. He left her free in the exercise of her religious and charitable works. She arose at six o'clock, made her toilette, and then went to her private chapel for morning prayers and for the Mass celebrated by her chaplain, Abbé Doussot. She also attended Mass and other religious services at the Church of Saint Roch, which was the parish church near the Palais-Royal; and she often went to the Monastery des Oiseaux to pray and to visit her sister-in-law, Sister Marie of the Cross. As she remarked in a letter to Canon Gazelli, her husband even permitted her to have holy water at her bedside.

What Clotilde did not know was that her husband's tolerance of her religious practices became the butt of jokes which were being whispered at the Tuileries and in the drawing rooms of other palaces in Paris. One joke was that Prince Napoleon had asked his wife whether she preferred to have her coffee before or after Holy Communion; another, that when she asked if she might have holy water in her bedroom, he readily acquiesced, saying that he would immediately send one of the servants to get some at a pharmacy.

But what she could not help knowing was the total dis-

regard of traditional religion and morality which was being championed by Prince Napoleon and those who gathered in the salons of the Palais-Royal. Night after night, as she mingled among their guests or sat quietly in the midst of the heated discussions which her husband had with men like Renan and Sainte-Beuve, she realized that there was a world of ideas about which she knew nothing and cared less. She wrote to Canon Gazelli, "If you only knew all that my ears listen to on matters of religion and morality!"

Princess Clotilde, however, had a strong sense of reality. Whatever is, the here and now, all the realities which are present and actual (in all their defects, even in all their evils) have within them, potentially at least, the seeds of goodness which can come to fruition if they are nurtured by a genuine love. This was the creed by which she would live and patiently wait.

The first potential for her was her husband. He seemed happy and she would try to keep him so, in the hope that she could eventually offset the influence of forces which she knew were now stronger than hers. She accompanied her husband to the dinners, receptions, balls, and masquerades held at the Tuileries, at Fontainebleau, Saint-Cloud, and Compiègne. She went with him to concerts, to the theater, and on hunting parties.

Every Monday evening at the Tuileries the Emperor and Empress held a dinner for all the members of the Bonaparte family who were residing in Paris: Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde, Princess Matilde, Prince Charles Bonaparte and his wife; the Marquise Roccagiovine, the Countess Primoli, the Princess Gabrielli and their husbands. The scheduled hour for the dinner was seven o'clock; but it was rarely announced before eight because the Emperor made it a rule to call for the Empress at her apartments before they joined their guests, who assembled in the salon

adjoining the dining room on the first floor. As the Emperor approached with the Empress on his arm, the usher announced Their Imperial Majesties and the doors were thrown open. On ordinary occasions the dinner party varied in number from twelve to eighteen. The Emperor always sat at the middle of the table, with the Empress on the left. The table was decorated with a large centerpiece of flowers in Sèvres bowls. Dishes were of plated silver stamped with the imperial coat of arms. The Emperor and the Prince Imperial each had a liveried footman behind him; the Empress had a handsome Negro in Turkish costume behind her. After the dinner the Emperor and the Empress led the way back to the Apollo Room, where coffee was served while everybody chatted. The Emperor would then retire to his cabinet downstairs for his cigarette and perhaps reappear when tea was served in the gold-lined cups at eleven o'clock. After that the Empress would make her celebrated bow, a curtsy which took in the whole circle as she bade them all good night.

Sometimes a ball would follow the Monday dinner—days that came to be known as the Empress's "little Mondays." But the grand balls, three or four in number before the Lenten season began, were given in January. To these galas came members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, ambassadors, ministers, admirals, generals, high civic officials, and others who had been invited. Some of the men were in military uniforms; others, in diplomatic coats glittering with gold braid; still others, in cassimere-satinette breeches with white silk stockings. The women wore low-cut gowns with silken hoops or crinolines made gayer with flowers and ribbon bows or blazing with gems. At nine o'clock came the grand march for the entrance of Their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor usually in his general's outfit overspread with medals and crosses, and the Empress in a

gown of blue or white or mauve and wearing the crown diamonds.

The masked ball had been brought back into fashion during the Second Empire. The guests at the Tuileries, especially the ladies, vied with one another in startling the company by some daring or significant costume. On one occasion the coquettish Countess Virginia Verasis-Castiglione, one of the Emperor's favorites, appeared in a Queen of Hearts costume which sent the Empress into a tantrum.

Paris was mad with pleasure, especially with the pleasure of dancing. Dancing was everywhere, not only at the Tuileries but at the embassies, at other palaces, out in the open where couples waltzed to the music of Strauss under illuminated trees, and at public dancing halls like the Mabilles Gardens, where Rose Pompon led in the cancan and dancers kicked high their black-silk-stockinged legs, displaying their full and lace-trimmed petticoats.

Besides the Tuileries, there was gaiety and feasting at the imperial residences of Saint-Cloud, Fontainebleau, and Compiègne. Saint-Cloud was the most convenient, being nearer the capital, and its close association with the First Empire made it especially dear to Napoleon III. "I almost feel sometimes as I walk these leafy alleys," he once said, "that I am in direct communion with the great Emperor. Anyway, I always return to the Tuileries with a stronger will, a braver heart, and a clearer conscience." Fontainebleau was connected with too many sad events in Napoleonic history ever to be a perfectly satisfying place for Napoleon III, but Eugénie loved the grand forest and the many beautiful drives and walks of Denecourt.

However, it was to the Château of Compiègne, forty-five miles northeast of Paris, that not only the Emperor and Empress but also Princess Clotilde liked to go because the

court etiquette there was kept at a minimum and life was more informal. The evenings were usually spent in chatting and dancing to the music of the newly invented mechanical piano, whose handle was turned by self-sacrificing guests, or in participating in various intellectual games such as "Little Papers" and "Questions and Answers." There were also amateur theatricals such as charades and tableaux.

It was during the hunting season that Compiègne was the most popular since the meets were held there in autumn. On hunting days the Emperor, the Empress, and their guests assembled at the King's Well, which was situated in the center of the forest. After saying a word or two to the principal persons of the group, the Emperor and Empress would mount, and a moment afterward the order was given to begin. Thereupon the cavalcade started forth, the huntsmen at the head. Directly after them rode the sovereigns, guests, and others. Guests who were not in the habit of riding horseback drove in drags or in large pleasure vans harnessed like coaches.

All in the party wore a hunting costume, which consisted of a French-cut green coat with wide collar and trimming in crimson velvet embellished with gold and silver braid, a waistcoat of braided crimson velvet, knickerbockers of white kid, white necktie and gloves, and a three-cornered hat set off with black feathers. The costume of the Emperor was similar except that he had white feathers in his hat and the Legion of Honor on his breast. The costume of the Empress consisted of a green cloth bodice with braided collar and trimmings of crimson velvet, a skirt of green cloth without braid, and a three-cornered hat ornamented with white feathers.

Clotilde tried to keep to a minimum her attendance at entertainments which were not to her taste; those which

she could not avoid, she submitted to with good grace. She attended the dinners and balls, even the masked balls, but she would not indulge in the extravagances which were prevalent. At the masquerades she chose for herself the costume of a Sardinian peasant or she impersonated a woman of history, such as Mary Queen of Scots.

In a letter to Canon Gazelli she wrote in confidence: "The Monday family dinners at the Tuileries have begun, but I assure you that I would willingly absent myself from all these entertainments if I could do so with propriety. However, I attend them only when I cannot do otherwise. In this way I merely fulfill my duty, for I realize that if I let myself go I would enjoy myself too much."

To concerts, however, she went willingly. She loved music and the concerts then being given in Paris by the Hungarian composer and pianist Franz von Liszt were pure pleasure for her. In her catalog of legitimate pleasures were also horseback riding and hunting, and in these she participated readily, especially when she accompanied her husband in the forest near their Château of Meudon. Her only regret was that he insisted on going on Sundays when she would have preferred going to Vespers and Benediction. But as she wrote to Canon Gazelli: "It pleases my husband that I go with him. So what can I do? I am sure that the good Lord would prefer that I make the sacrifice and go with my husband, rather than go to Vespers and Benediction and annoy my husband."

Clotilde had been married hardly seven or eight months when it was brought home to her that the mere desire to keep her husband happy would not be enough, that to her desire she must add action. It was at the Hôtel Métropole in Geneva, where Clotilde and her husband were staying in mid-September, 1859, that Camilla di Foras, the former assistant governess at Turin, paid Clotilde an unexpected visit.

Camilla had been worried about Clotilde ever since one of the ladies in waiting at the Palais-Royal had told her that Prince Napoleon did not like his wife's too conservative taste in clothes and hair style, and her ignorance of contemporary science, philosophy, and literature. Camilla did not want to hurt the Princess but she did want to forewarn her.

When Clotilde entered the drawing room where Camilla was waiting, she rushed to embrace her former governess in order to keep her from making the customary curtsy to royalty.

"Your Highness has grown! You have become taller!" Camilla said excitedly.

"O Camilla, I can't tell you how happy I am to see you. I have been longing to talk with someone from Turin."

"But isn't the Countess Villamarina with you?" Camilla asked.

"No," Clotilde replied somewhat sadly. "The Countess and the others have all returned to the Court of Turin. They could not become accustomed to their new life at the Palais-Royal. At the Court of Turin, as you know, each one has his own duties definitely set out, duties which he discharges until he is old enough to be retired with a royal pension. But at the Palais-Royal, everything is vague and insecure, and the personnel are hired and discharged at will, the discharged having only the customary two-weeks' notice."

Clotilde then led Camilla to a divan in the adjoining insecure, and the personnel are hired and discharged at most as if she were afraid to ask, "But the Prince is good to you, isn't he?"

"Yes, he is, very good, but—" Clotilde stopped as though she were afraid of being uncharitable if she said more.

"But what, Clotilde? You know you can confide in me because I love you and want to see you happy."

"Oh, if my husband weren't so totally lacking in religion. I know God is good and in His own time will grant my husband the grace of conversion, but meanwhile I don't know what to do."

Camilla put her arms around Clotilde and tried to comfort her. "You will see, dearest, that God will grant the grace you so much desire. I know that God has willed this marriage precisely for your husband's conversion, for which I know you would be willing to pay any price."

"Any price. There is nothing which I would not do for the grace of his conversion."

Camilla took the opportunity which Clotilde's words offered.

"Dearest," she began, "you must first do all you can to draw your husband closer and closer to you in natural ways. Make yourself as attractive as possible for his sake. You know that your husband has been accustomed to the company not only of beautiful ladies but of women who are cultured and elegant conversationalists. Familiarize yourself with the current ideas that are being discussed in the salons of the Palais-Royal so that you can participate in the discussions with your husband. . . . You must change your hair style. The *coiffure de bain* simply won't do in Paris where the Empress and all the ladies of her court wear dangling curls set off with ribbons and flowers. . . ."

While Camilla spoke, Princess Clotilde listened submissively like a schoolgirl listening to a reproof from a respected teacher.

"O Camilla, tell me what I should do and I will do it," Clotilde promised.

At that moment Prince Napoleon knocked on the door and the two rose to greet him. He had come to tell them that luncheon was being served. Would Camilla join him and Clotilde?

During the meal Camilla watched the Prince closely. In

spite of a certain brusqueness of manner, he seemed attentive enough to his wife. But Camilla realized that it would not be easy for Clotilde to keep this man faithful to her.

The next day Clotilde and her husband returned to Paris and Camilla to Turin.

In her journal Camilla noted her impressions of Clotilde and Prince Napoleon. Of Clotilde she wrote: "The Princess has grown taller, but she is a little pale. She is always the sweet, affectionate, and pious little girl whom I have loved so much!" Of her observations of Prince Napoleon while he was having luncheon with her and Clotilde, Camilla wrote: "His resemblance to the picture of the great Emperor Napoleon I is striking: his eyes, his hair, his complexion—all are reminiscent of his Corsican origin. His countenance, extremely intelligent, is habitually scornful and a bit rude; but when he smiles, his face lights up and his look becomes very pleasing. He speaks with animation and like a very learned man, but he speaks little. His manners with the Princess are respectful and cordial enough."

Clotilde made a concerted effort to put Camilla's suggestions into practice. As she soon wrote to Camilla: "I have completely abandoned the *coiffure de bain*, having had it but twice and then only in the morning. I am also trying to be facile in conversation. We haven't yet attained perfection in it, but we hope eventually to succeed. You make an apology in your letter for your attempt to instruct me; but continue to do so, please, for I assure you that your suggestions are most welcome. I beg you to continue them and I will do my best to profit from them."

Relative to her attempts to please her husband not only by accompanying him whenever she could but also by acquainting herself with contemporary thought, she wrote later to Camilla, on March 5, 1860:

I have been to Compiègne where I have passed ten delightful days, but I did not go riding as I had not brought my horse, and Napoleon preferred that I not ride rather than ride a horse with which I am not familiar.

My stay here has been enchanting since at Compiègne one does what one wishes and there is not too much etiquette.

The Empress is always so good, so full of care for me, seeking to give me pleasure on every occasion. Truly I have everything to be thankful for. I am most happy, and my family is good to me. I continue always my lessons in history and literature: they are very interesting. I have also resumed my lessons in German and these too I enjoy. A little at a time and I shall succeed in doing everything, since I am so young and here they know so many things.

I always have Mass in my chapel, but on Sundays Mass is said in my father-in-law's apartment, where there is also a chapel. Every Sunday we have dinner at the Court. This evening we shall go to a grand concert; on this coming Friday, there will be a *première* at the theater.



PERIOD OF CALM AND STORM

Although Clotilde was discovering little by little the many contradictions in her husband's character, their marital relationship seemed to grow in intimacy and there had not been as yet any open disagreement between them. Sometimes Prince Napoleon was in a sulk, at which times he would appear in severe black at the most gorgeous ceremonies of the court, assuming an attitude of disdain for everyone and everything around him. Sometimes they had hardly arrived at some function when he would turn to his wife and tell her that they were leaving. He seemed able to move at will from disdain to a brilliant charm. In the presence of his friends, his powers of mind expanded; but with those who questioned his tastes, his theories, or his position, he would burst into a violent temper and his words were arrows which always hit their target.

Clotilde tried not to cross him in anything since there had not been any involvement of her moral or religious principles. Hence she was able to write to her friend the Marquise della Rovere on March 10, 1860: "I have a truly pleasant life, and I am most happy. I go with Napoleon to visit the monuments of Paris and all is very interesting. He

is so good and so learned that this doubles my pleasure."

Matters were working out well in other directions too. The Empress seemed more and more friendly toward Clotilde. Perhaps the Empress's dislike of Princess Matilde and Prince Napoleon made her all the more considerate of Clotilde. When she heard that Princess Matilde considered her sister-in-law something of a bigot because of her conservative attitudes, the Empress confided to her old friend Prosper Mérimée, "Do you see that little insignificant princess of Savoy—well, she has conquered more hearts in six months than I have in six years." Then she added what she had often said before to Mérimée, "I would willingly give ten years of my life if only Paris would love me a little."

However, Clotilde was disturbed by the news from Italy. Cavour, who had resigned in protest against the peace of Villafranca, had returned to power in January, 1860. And in March of that year the Treaty of Turin had been signed whereby France had agreed to the annexation of the Duchies of Parma, Modena, and Tuscany and of the Papal State of Romagna to the Kingdom of Sardinia. In return France had received Savoy and Nice. All these settlements had been the result of plebiscites, but the plebiscites had not been wholly without the action of *agents provocateurs*, who knew how to stir up people to declare for a new government. Clotilde did not share her father's gratification at these developments. King Victor Emmanuel did not have all of Italy under his rule—there were still Venetia in the north and the Two Sicilies in the south and, above all, there was still Rome to be got before he would be fully satisfied. . . .

The first serious signs of Prince Napoleon's religious antagonism came in June of 1860. The first instance was unfortunate; the second, unavoidable.

It was Sunday, June 3, 1860, the Feast of Saint Clotilde, and Princess Clotilde was attending services in the Church of Saint Roch. A panegyric on the life of Saint Clotilde was being delivered by a priest who had more zeal than tact. The priest first reviewed the life of Queen Clotilde, who was the wife of Clovis, the first Christian king of the Franks. The ancient Clotilde had espoused Clovis while he was still a pagan, but she had been the means of leading him to the acceptance of Christianity. Princess Clotilde listened attentively to the account of her patron's life until the preacher turned to her in the imperial tribune and, much to her embarrassment and consternation, said that he hoped the new Clotilde in Paris would be able to do as much for the new Clovis.

The next day the reference to the new Clovis was jokingly repeated in all the salons of Paris, and Prince Napoleon was furious. As soon as he heard it, he went to his wife's apartment in the Palais-Royal. When Clotilde saw her husband standing in the doorway of her boudoir, she knew that he had heard.

"So, you're going to convert me," he sneered.

"No, Napoleon, God alone can convert anyone."

"You and your God, when you don't even know whether He exists. And from this day forth, you shall never put your foot in that church again. You understand?" he almost screamed at her.

"But, Napoleon," she began.

"No *buts*," he interrupted. "You shall never return to that church again." And with that he turned and left her apartment.

That night Clotilde could not sleep because it was the first night since their marriage that he had not come to kiss her good-night.

The second disturbing incident occurred a few weeks

later, during the critical illness of ex-King Jerome. Clotilde's father-in-law had suffered a first attack of paralysis in November, 1859, from which he had partially recovered. Under his doctor's orders, he had gone to his estate at Villegenis in the Department of Seine-et-Oise, and there at the end of May, 1860, he had his second attack. Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde hastened to Villegenis to be with the ex-King until the end. Prince Napoleon, who was very much attached to his father, was heartbroken. Clotilde, who loved her father-in-law as her own father, did all she could to alleviate his suffering; but her main concern was his spiritual needs. She knew that her husband would object to any suggestion that a priest be summoned. While she prayed and watched as the ex-King lapsed into a semicoma from time to time, she wondered what she could and should do.

Once she thought she heard her father-in-law whisper, "Elizabeth!" In those moments, when he lost partial control over his thoughts, images kept arising from his subconscious memory, images of his days in the United States, when as a young man of nineteen he had fallen in love with an American girl, Elizabeth Patterson of Baltimore, and had married her before he returned to Paris. Several times the ex-King had spoken to Clotilde of his early life. He told her how he had been persuaded by his brother, Emperor Napoleon I, to divorce Elizabeth and give up the child that was his. In recompense the Emperor had crowned him King of Westphalia in Prussia; but Jerome had never been able to forget entirely his first love even though he had later married Princess Frederica Catherine, daughter of the King of Württemberg, of which marriage had been born Princess Matilde and Prince Napoleon. Catherine had loved Jerome dearly, passionately even, and he had loved Catherine; but the image of Elizabeth had

remained in the depths of his heart. And now that image rose like a benediction over his dying hours. "Elizabeth," he whispered and smiled.

Clotilde tried to turn his thoughts from the past to the present. "Papà," she whispered, "do you know me? I'm Clotilde." And sometimes when he smiled in recognition, she whispered a prayer, but not so loud that Prince Napoleon and Princess Matilde could hear. Matilde had been summoned when her father's condition worsened, but Clotilde knew that, like her brother, Matilde would scorn the idea of getting a priest.

Finally, Clotilde decided to risk all in order to gain all. Under pretext of purchasing mourning clothes for herself in the event of the death which now seemed imminent, Clotilde sent her maid to Paris on June 23 with a letter for Empress Eugénie.

That afternoon the Emperor and Empress arrived at Villegenis and with them the court chaplain. A little later the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris arrived. The curate of Villegenis gave the dying man absolution *in articulo mortis* and the Cardinal Archbishop anointed him. Clotilde was consoled when the court chaplain said that the ex-King had been to confession in Paris just before he departed for Villegenis and that his confession had been as simple and earnest as a child's for his First Holy Communion. But Clotilde intuited what would happen after the Emperor and Empress left.

The Emperor and Empress had hardly gone when Prince Napoleon turned on his wife. "It was you who had those priests come. Tell the truth. You can't deny it. You, you stupid, crazy fanatic! Get out of my father's house at once! Don't stay around here because I won't be responsible for what I do!"

Clotilde kept silent until her husband's words of anger

had spent themselves. Then she prepared to leave. Taking with her one of the maids, she summoned a carriage and left for Paris.

On her arrival at the Palais-Royal she dismissed the maid and then went to the chapel in her apartment where she remained the greater part of the night. She felt like crying, but when she reflected on the graces of that day, peace flooded her soul and her whole being was caught up in the great mystery of God's mercy.

The next day she returned to Villegenis, to her father-in-law's bedside, as if nothing had happened. Her husband did not speak, but Clotilde realized it was now not the silence of anger but of sorrow. Her husband made no effort to interfere with her ministrations to his father, as she kept whispering into his ear acts of faith, hope, and love.

At sunset of the same day, June 24, ex-King Jerome Bonaparte died peacefully, almost without agony, in Clotilde's arms. His last conscious act was kissing the crucifix which was held to his lips by the nun-nurse who had been taking care of him. The minute the ex-King died, Clotilde sank to her knees in prayer while her husband and sister-in-law went out of the room sobbing wildly.

To King Victor Emmanuel II Clotilde wrote concerning her father-in-law's death: "The misfortune which has befallen us is sorrowful for everyone but especially for me because the dear Papà was so good to me and I loved him so much. The good God alone, who has been truly good to us in these difficulties, can help us to support this trial. Please tell Canon Gazelli that Papà died like a just man, and how much I have been consoled in the midst of affliction."

Referring to the night before her father-in-law's death, Clotilde later wrote to the Canon: "I had a great desire to

weep that night, going to Paris, after literally being put out the door, but I consoled myself, thinking that it had already been much, in fact too much, to have been able to do the little which I did."

Prince Napoleon remained disconsolate for some time. After the funeral he wrote to George Sand: "It is not only a father that I have lost; it is my best friend, the confidant of all my actions from the time that I had the use of reason. He was the better part of my being which is no longer. And yet I have to go on living, that is to say, go on struggling and suffering."

The death of ex-King Jerome had eliminated the last bond of communication between Prince Napoleon and Princess Matilde, and between the both of them and the Imperial Court. More and more Prince Napoleon and his sister now tended to stay away from the Tuileries.

Referring to her brother, Matilde used to say: "He is an impossible being. I know this well and everyone else in France is of the same opinion." Prince Napoleon's opinion of his sister was no less sarcastic: "She is, without doubt, an intelligent woman but she poses too much like a grand lady of the Italian Renaissance. Like a lizard in the sun, she basks in a fame which is out of all proportion to her real worth."

Matilde held in horror the Imperial Court, women, priests, and cardinals. Speaking of the Court she said, "Every time I go there I can hardly wait to return *à moi et à mon cher moi*." To her salonful of male intellectuals and artists, she used to say: "With the majority of women whom we see and receive, it is not possible to have a sensible discourse. If, for example, a woman were to enter here now, I would soon have to change the topic of conversation."

In spite of their strong dislike of the Empress, however,

both Prince Napoleon and Princess Matilde fared well with the Emperor. No matter how much Prince Napoleon opposed him politically, the Emperor always retained a great affection and respect for him. And he never lost his love for Matilde, with whom he had once been passionately in love, when she was fifteen and he, thirty. Matilde had often reproached herself for not having capitalized on their romance, for she now would have been the empress instead of "the Spaniard." And the irony of the situation was that she had introduced her cousin to the Countess Eugénie of Montijo. However, Matilde did not scruple using the hold which she still had over Napoleon III, sometimes even using it for the purpose of putting her brother in a bad light with the Emperor.

Clotilde was caught in the middle of these personal antagonisms and feuds. Moreover, she was beginning to realize that she could never hope to equal the intellectual and social attainments of either Princess Matilde or Prince Napoleon. Her husband was a brilliant intellectual, even though his knowledge of some things was not profound. He knew five languages; from memory he could quote passages from Latin, Italian, French, English, and German authors; and he had a good acquaintance with contemporary French, Italian, and English literature. Although Clotilde was intelligent, she was not an intellectual. She was cultured but she was not a cultist; she dressed in fashion but she was not a faddist. Hence, she was glad when her husband suggested in September, 1860, that they go on a cruise to England on their new yacht, *Jerome Napoleon*.

Clotilde seemed to breathe freely again. With the blue sky above them and the bluer waters around them, Prince Napoleon was again the lover of the first few months of their marriage. But they had no sooner reached England when the yacht was headed toward France again. Cavour

was bombarding Prince Napoleon with letters on the Italian political problems. It was beginning all over again—politics, politics, politics. . . .

Clotilde would not allow herself to analyze what the recent Italian events presaged for the House of Savoy. Already Cavour and her father had been placed under ecclesiastical censure by Pope Pius IX.

Taking advantage of the ferment in southern Italy, Garibaldi and his thousand "redshirts" had sailed from Genoa for Sicily in May, 1860. Within three months he and his men had taken Sicily and Naples. Her father's army had invaded the reduced Papal States and defeated the papal troops. And Cavour, despite the protests of Pope Pius IX, had announced Sardinia's appropriation of the Papal States with the exception of Rome and its immediately surrounding territory.

Shortly after Prince Napoleon and his wife arrived in Paris from England, they received word that Victor Emmanuel II had ridden side by side with Garibaldi through the streets of Naples amid the bravos of the people. Allowing his desire for Italian unity to take precedence over his republicanism, Garibaldi had yielded to the King when the two met at Naples and together they had completed the conquest of the Two Sicilies.

But the political lions, Cavour and Victor Emmanuel, were still seeking more prey. In the session of the new Italian Parliament, which opened on February 18, 1861, at Turin, Cavour affirmed that it was impossible to conceive of a united Italy without Rome as its capital. In his words, "We have the right, in fact the duty, to insist that Rome be united to Italy because without Rome as the capital, Italy cannot be formed." On March 17 the title *King of Italy* was conferred on the King of Sardinia, and Victor Emmanuel II became the first king of the new Kingdom of Italy.

Victor Emmanuel and Cavour were counting on Prince Napoleon to convince the French General Assembly that Rome should become the capital of the new Kingdom of Italy. In the secret preliminary meetings of the French Senate in mid-February, Prince Napoleon defended Italy's demand of Rome. On March 1, at the first meeting of the joint chambers of the French General Assembly, he spoke for three hours on the Italian question—that it would be to the good of France and Italy if the French would help the Italians to emancipate themselves from the Austrians in Venetia. From the Austrian problem it was logical to pass on to the Roman Question. And although he wasn't sure that the majority in the assembly would agree with him, he proceeded with great vigor, "The unity of Italy, messieurs, has only one name—Rome!"

Prince Napoleon went on to say that he did not oppose the spiritual power of the Pope, and that a certain temporal sovereignty and independence was necessary for the exercise of that spiritual power. But while granting that the Pope should not be subject to any temporal sovereign, he was of the opinion that the Pope's temporal sovereignty should be restricted to the confines of the Vatican and that Rome belonged to Italy.

"Look at a map of the city," he said. "The Tiber divides the city into two parts: on the right bank is the Catholic city, the Vatican, Saint Peter; on the left bank is the city of the ancient Caesars, the Aventine, the great remains of Imperial Rome. Since the most vital part of Catholicism is on the right bank, it should be possible to urge—I do not say to force—the Pope to understand the necessity of limiting himself, giving him guarantees of his independence within these limits."

The assembly applauded when Prince Napoleon finished his discourse; but when the senators and deputies heard of the unfavorable reactions at the Tuileries and elsewhere in

Paris, they were not so sure of their first impressions. That same night Victor Emmanuel telegraphed his son-in-law: "I have read your magnificent discourse. I congratulate you and I thank you in my name and in the name of Italy."

A few days later Cavour sent Prince Napoleon a letter of congratulation:

The discourse of Your Highness was for the temporal power of the Pope what Solferino was for the Austrian domination. It should still be possible to negotiate as was done at Villafranca and at Zurich, but the authority of the Pope is as dead as Austrian influence. Although we are very near our goal, I feel that we have yet many difficulties to overcome. The help of Your Highness will not be wanting, I know. After having made such large breaches in the wall of the Eternal City, Your Highness will give us the final push that will facilitate our entering it.

It will be a great event not only for Italy but also for France and for the world. The destruction of that temporal power will be one of the most glorious and fecund facts in the history of mankind, to which the name of Your Highness will always be linked.

I am very sorry that you have had to forego for the moment the project of your visit to Italy. My country joins with me in regretting this delay. Nevertheless I console myself with the thought that in the not too distant future the King will be able to make his entry into Rome and that Your Highness will accompany him.

The same flattering Cavour. He had not changed.

On the Roman Question, Clotilde found herself in opposition to her father and her husband. Loyalty to the Church and the Pope was something that had been in the

marrow of her conscience from her earliest childhood, when her governess explained to her the symbolic meaning of the two paintings by Vanloo which hung in the chapel of the Royal Palace in Turin. One painting showed Christ giving the keys to Saint Peter; the other, Christ commanding Saint Peter, "Feed my lambs." Christ and Saint Peter were identified in Clotilde's mind with the Church and the Pope, an identification so close that in the words of Saint Catherine of Siena, the Pope is "the sweet Christ on earth." Clotilde's devotion to the Church was synonymous with her devotion to the Vicar of Christ, and her loyalty to the Vicar of Christ was an integral part of her love of Christ. She could admit no division in the seamless robe of her devotion.

She suffered interiorly when the members of her husband's circle—to whom she always referred as "Renan, Sainte-Beuve, and company"—railed against Pius IX, against priests, against the Church; but she kept silent, knowing that anything she said would be scorned. She hoped and prayed that her husband could get away for a while from the politically tense atmosphere of the Palais-Royal; and the answer to her prayer came like a fresh breeze at the end of a scorchingly hot day when her husband announced that partly for business and partly for pleasure he was going for a cruise to North America.

The departure, however, was delayed a week or more by the unexpected illness of Prime Minister Cavour. When Prince Napoleon heard of Cavour's attack of pernicious malaria on May 29, 1861, he decided to await the outcome of the illness of the famous *Tessitore*—the Weaver, as he was called in political circles. Instead of recovering, Cavour grew increasingly worse even though he kept on talking to everyone who visited him.

A few days after the attack of a disease to which he had

been subject for a number of years, the enigmatic Cavour said to his servant: "Martino, we must soon take leave of each other. When the moment approaches, send for Padre Giacomo, the Franciscan pastor of the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, who promised me as far back as 1856 that he would assist me in my last moments."

On the morning of June 5, Padre Giacomo came, heard Cavour's confession, and gave him absolution. After the priest left, Cavour said to his brother, his niece, and the few intimates around the sickbed: "I have confessed and I have received absolution; later I shall receive Holy Communion. I want all to know. I want the good people of Turin to know that I die as a good Christian. I am tranquil. I have never done any harm to anyone."

That evening King Victor Emmanuel II visited his Prime Minister. The saddened King listened in silence as Cavour kept talking. "O Sire," he was saying, "I have so many things to tell you, so many papers to show you, but I am too ill. It will be impossible for me to come to you, but tomorrow I shall send Farini to you and he will speak to you of everything in particular." The King tried to quiet the Prime Minister, telling him he should rest and not think of politics. But Cavour only rambled on, "Has Your Majesty received from Paris the letter for which you have been waiting? The Emperor is now very good to us, yes, very good!"

Realizing that Cavour would insist on talking so long as his King remained at his bedside, Victor Emmanuel clasped in farewell the hand of his dying Prime Minister, then left the room.

When Cavour was again with his brother and niece and one or two of his intimates, he began to talk again: "Italy is nearly made. There are no longer Lombards, Piedmontese, Romans, Tuscans; we are all Italians!"

His old servant, who perhaps knew Cavour the man better than anyone else, said: "The voice of my master is getting weaker. When he can no longer speak, he will have ceased to live."

At about five o'clock the next morning, June 6, Padre Giacomo administered extreme unction, after which Cavour seemed to have lost the power of speech although he was still conscious. Then, suddenly, a new light seemed to come into his eyes, and he turned to his niece, the Countess Alfieri. When she bent over him, he kissed her twice and said loud enough to be heard, "Good-bye and thanks again, my dear little one." His last words, however, were to Padre Giacomo, standing nearby, "Padre, Padre, a free church in a free state!" A free church in a free state—this had been the slogan which he had formed for himself and his fellow liberals. He wanted to die with the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, but his last words were to tell the Church that he also wanted to die as a liberal.

While all Turin was mourning and praising one whom they considered the greatest of Italian statesmen, Padre Giacomo was summoned to Rome where he was rebuked for giving absolution without having first demanded a retraction. He was reminded that on March 25, 1860, Pope Pius IX had issued a major excommunication on "all the authors, promoters, counselors, and accomplices of the crime committed against the Holy See with the usurpation of the Romagna." Padre Giacomo refused to answer some of the questions put to him by the tribunal set up to examine his action. He was permitted to return to Turin but he was deprived of the office of pastor.

The death of Cavour was a great blow both to King Victor Emmanuel and Prince Napoleon. More than ever, the Prince now wanted to get away from everything as he hastened his final preparations for his voyage.

Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde left on their yacht, *Jerome Napoleon*, in mid-June, 1861. Among those aboard were the Duchess d'Abrantès and the Baron Berthet, companions for Clotilde, and Maurice Dudevant, son of George Sand. The original plan was that Clotilde would accompany her husband only as far as Lisbon, but when they reached there she begged him to allow her to go with him to North America and he agreed.

The weeks on the Atlantic Ocean were a tranquilizer for the restless Prince, and Clotilde herself felt calmer being away from Paris, the Tuileries, and the Palais-Royal. Later, she was to say that from June to October, 1861, had been the happiest days of their marital life.

When the yacht arrived in New York Harbor, the United States was waging a civil war; but there was an official welcome. In the words of *Harper's Weekly*: "Of the many European dignitaries who visited the United States in the course of the Civil War, none received a greater reception than Prince Napoleon, the adventuresome cousin of Emperor Napoleon III."

Almost immediately Prince Napoleon went on a tour of the eastern part of the country, but Clotilde remained in New York City because of exhaustion. While Prince Napoleon—he was soon popularly called Plon-Plon by the Americans—made state calls on the larger northern cities, reviewed the Army of the Potomac, got a glimpse of Jeb Stuart's Confederate cavalry in Virginia, and visited President Lincoln in the White House, Clotilde spent her time studying English, writing letters, and visiting churches and convents.

With some of his aides-de-camp the Prince visited the White House at noon on Saturday, August 3, 1861. He was met at the door by William Henry Seward, the Secretary of State, and conducted to President Lincoln's office, where

the President received the Prince with marked courtesy in a few simple but sincere words of welcome and compliment. Without seeking, he said, to attach undue importance to the visit of one so closely allied to the French throne, he felt that the Prince's presence at the capital was a guarantee of the sympathetic interest of the French government. Prince Napoleon listened attentively, then replied briefly but warmly in the name of his own country.

It was during this visit to the White House that a *faux pas* in protocol was made. In the Prince's honor a band played several stanzas of the *Marseillaise*, a song not normally heard in France during the days of the Second Empire. The Prince, rising to the occasion, smiled and commented, "Ah, yes, I am a republican—in America." Actually he was a militant partisan of republicanism; in fact, he had opposed the creation of the Second Empire by his cousin.

From Washington, Prince Napoleon went on a hunting expedition in the West. Clotilde again remained behind, in a New York hotel with the Duchess d'Abrantès. The loneliness of the separation from her husband was somewhat softened by his promise to take her to Niagara Falls on his return.

Meanwhile Clotilde assisted at daily Mass and received Holy Communion three or four times a week at the Church of Saint Stephen on East 29th Street. Having heard that the Religious of the Sacred Heart conducted Manhattanville College, then in New York City, she expressed to the Italian Ambassador her desire to visit them. Some of her former ladies in waiting had been pupils of the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Turin, and Clotilde felt that she would feel at home with the religious at Manhattanville.

When the Italian Ambassador visited Manhattanville and spoke of Clotilde's desire, Mother Hardey sent an in-

invitation to Clotilde, suggesting that she come for the Feast of the Assumption. The invitation was pinned to a bouquet of American Beauties, in the center of which were white roses forming the letter C.

Wearing a simple dress of plain silk, a lace mantilla, and a small leghorn hat, and accompanied by the Duchess d'Abrantès and the Italian Ambassador, Clotilde arrived promptly at two o'clock, the appointed time for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

During the reception which followed, Clotilde was happy to meet among the religious on the faculty Mother Tommasini, who had come from Turin and who remembered Clotilde when the latter was a little girl. Throwing herself into Mother Tommasini's arms, Clotilde exclaimed, "Oh, what beautiful days you bring back and now I am so, so alone!"

The meeting with Mother Tommasini was a happy coincidence for Clotilde. For several weeks she visited Manhattanville almost daily, and she forgot her loneliness as the two talked of *la bella Italia*, and Clotilde recounted the stories of some of the Blesseds of the House of Savoy, especially of the Venerable Maria Clotilde, the sister of King Louis XVI of France who married King Charles Emmanuel IV of Sardinia. After the death of his wife, Charles Emmanuel abdicated and then entered the Society of Jesus.

When Mother Hardey learned that Clotilde had a great desire to reconsecrate herself as a Child of Mary, she had a special medal of our Lady made on which was engraved the name *Princess Clotilde*. As Mother Hardey was offering it to her, Clotilde said, "Oh, let us go into the chapel to put it on." While Clotilde was reading her act of consecration before the altar of our Lady, Mother Hardey stood beside her holding the medal. Afterwards, in gratitude, the Princess knelt down and kissed the feet of Mother

Hardey with such a swift movement that the religious could not prevent the Princess from doing so. "Oh, how happy you have made me," Clotilde said as she rose to her feet.

This gesture on Clotilde's part was characteristic of her simplicity and of her reverence for a religious whom she considered a saint. In someone else such a gesture could be an affectation, a dramatic pose; but affectation and pose could never be predicated of a character so simple and virile as that of Princess Clotilde. Prayer was a necessary sustenance to her spirit and she felt that a conventual atmosphere was more conducive to this need of her soul.

Writing to Canon Gazelli on August 8, 1861, Clotilde confided:

When I find a convent I am always delighted. Everything is so tranquil there. Although I know that one can sanctify oneself in the world, it seems to me, as you will understand, that everything in a convent is much more conducive to sanctity. I have to give myself a little sermon because I am not so good as I should be. I know what I ought to do; but when I find the doing a little difficult or when the moment arrives to put into practice my good resolutions, it often happens that I don't, always finding some excuse for not doing so.

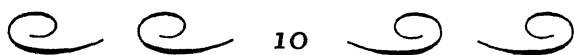
Maurice Dudevant, who had often observed Princess Clotilde in prayer during her stay in New York, later said, "The Princess in prayer was beautiful, having the candor and severity of one of Holbein's paintings."

Crowds used to follow Clotilde wherever she went even though she tried every subterfuge to escape being recognized. If she knew beforehand that people had gathered at the main door of her hotel to see her go out, she slipped out another door. Once, when it became known that she was to be present for Benediction at Manhattanville, the chapel was filled with curious women who hoped to get a

closer view of the Princess. But all looked in vain for one whom they could recognize as a princess. Clotilde, wearing the simple white veil of a school girl, had taken a place among the regular pupils. She was herself only eighteen years old at the time.

At the beginning of September, Prince Napoleon returned from his hunting and his sightseeing along the Great Lakes and the region of the Mississippi River. A few days later he and Clotilde went to Niagara Falls, in those days the American paradise for honeymooners. From Niagara Falls Clotilde wrote an ecstatic account of the beauty of the falls to Sister Marie of the Cross—how she and her husband were almost like children as they rode in a little boat under one of the smaller falls in order to see the effect of the sun on the foamy waters.

Prince Napoleon then proceeded into Canada while Clotilde returned to New York City, to prepare for their departure for France.



“NEAR ME A SMALL
CRADLE”

In late September, as the autumn touches of gold and russet were bronzing the greens in the Bois de Boulogne, Princess Clotilde was taking a walk through the beautiful park with the Countess de Tascher de la Pagerie, who said to her, “You are so good, so amiable, that I would do anything in order to see realized in you whatever your heart desires.”

With a smile Clotilde turned to the much older woman, whom she always playfully addressed with the nickname of *Mon illustre*: “My illustrious one, I desire nothing but to have near me a small cradle.”

Shortly after, Clotilde confided to her husband that they would soon need a cradle in the Palais-Royal. The thought of fatherhood transformed Prince Napoleon. He was like a little boy expecting a special toy for Christmas. He kept telling all his friends that he was soon to be a father—of a son, he hoped.

In answer to a letter of good wishes from George Sand, he wrote:

Your anticipated congratulations made me very happy. You guessed what I most desire in my life. Yes, I desire very much to have a son. It is necessary for my existence. Matrimony, for me, does not exist and is not complete without this. But how many fears! Will it be a boy? Not through vanity but because a boy will be more useful to his country, to the good cause! Will he be good, intelligent? Will he be what he should be and what I would wish him to be? I feel myself so much more *bound* since I have the hope of becoming a father. I have not yet accustomed myself to the idea. . . .

But the ecstasy at the thought of his fatherhood did not keep him from becoming more and more entangled politically. Clotilde kept writing to Sister Marie of the Cross asking her to solicit the prayers of her monastery for Prince Napoleon's increasingly disturbing actions in the French Senate.

At the second meeting of the Senate the Prince launched another attack, not on Rome and the Pope this time but on what he considered to be an erroneous concept of a Napoleonic empire. Unmindful of the livid face of the Emperor, who sat listening in the imperial tribune, he lashed forth:

The heredity which I defend is that which was proclaimed through the application of the great principles of the Revolution, and not the heredity of divine right. The first Napoleon said: "I accept the hereditary empire which you believe useful to the glory of the nation. I hope that France will never regret the honors with which she will surround my family. In any event, my spirit will be no longer with my posterity on the day they cease to merit the trust and love of this great nation." Here is the way the great Napoleon intended the heredity of his family.

The reaction of the Tuileries to this speech was much more vehement than its reaction to the speech on the Roman Question. The Emperor, in particular, was angry. The displeasure he had displayed after the Prince's first speech had been more apparent than real. Victor Emmanuel's army had invaded the Papal States in 1860 with the Emperor's tacit consent even though, as a gesture to mollify the Catholics in France, the Emperor had withdrawn his ambassador from Turin and reinforced the French garrison at Rome. However, at Cavour's death in June, 1861, the Emperor had sent King Victor Emmanuel an affectionate letter of sympathy and had reappointed an ambassador to his court.

Clotilde was glad that her pregnancy gave her an excuse to absent herself from some of the functions both at the Tuileries and in her own palace. Of late she had been troubled. Her disquiet had nothing to do with the metabolism of the new life which was fashioning itself from her own body. This disquiet lay deeper than nerves and glands and tissues—it was in the almost inaccessible marrow of her own identity.

As she was kneeling for her daily meditation one morning in her private chapel, she felt that she could not meditate. There was a sensible revulsion against the very idea of meditation. She was tempted to get up and leave. Daily meditation in the Palais-Royal seemed an anachronism. It was ridiculous trying to live like a saint in the most worldly environment in the world.

Suddenly she was startled by something within her, as if someone were asking her, "But who are you? Where are you going?" Then it came home to her that the disquiet was a new ambivalence which had been formed within her. It was not the ordinary ambivalence which is in every child

of Adam and of which Saint Paul writes in his Epistle to the Romans, "For I do not do the good that I wish, but the evil that I do not wish, that I perform." The new ambivalence was between a greater and a lesser good, one which had been created between her desire of spiritual perfection and her participation in worldly amusements so as to please her husband. She hardly recognized the new Clotilde who was slowly emerging. She feared that the woman who would eventually emerge would not be herself at all. In trying to be "one of them," she was in danger of losing her own identity: she was in danger of becoming a cheap imitation of somebody else's self.

"Who are you?" Would she have to answer to God, "I am Prince Napoleon or Princess Matilde or the actress Rachel or Madame Plessy or Princess Metternich, but I am not Clotilde of Savoy nor the Clotilde which Your grace would have me be." Would she have to answer, "Dear God, I don't know; I have no identity."

In the depths of her being she was face to face with herself. "Where are you going?" Would she have to answer to God, "I am going after everyone else; I am going away from You—and from myself."

She covered her face with her hands as if ashamed, as if frightened of what she might have become, of where she might have gone.

She still tried to avoid sin, went to confession every two weeks, received Holy Communion four or five times weekly at a time when frequent Holy Communion was almost unheard of among the laity, gave alms, and did other acts of charity. But there had been a perceptible lessening of effort in that total dedication to God which had characterized her from the age of two. Until the time of her marriage the pleasures and glitter of the world had had no attraction for her. Now she wasn't so sure. As she was to

write fourteen years later to the Dominican Padre Raimondo Bianchi, her spiritual director: "At sixteen and seventeen years of age, the world amused me. At the beginning I wanted to make a compromise between the Lord and the world. I wanted to serve one and profit from the other. . . . I experienced once a very strong temptation, when I was a little over nineteen, to give up everything. The devil, however, had chosen the wrong moment. It was while I was making my meditation. I shall always remember it. The Lord sustained me and I drove out the temptation which never returned."

She arose from her meditation relaxed and strengthened. Other temptations and trials would come but temptation in this guise, no—the subtle temptation of compromise.

The next day she decided to speak to her husband about the baptism of the child whose birth was only a week away.

They were together at dinner. Prince Napoleon seemed in a good mood, as he always was when he was anticipating a pleasant evening with "Renan, Sainte-Beuve, and company."

"Napoleon," Clotilde began, "our child will have to be baptized."

"Yes, of course. You wish it, don't you?"

"Yes, but we must think of the godparents."

"Oh, that. It's all decided, my dear. Your father, the King of Italy; and my cousin Sophie, the Queen of Holland."

"No, Napoleon. They can't be," Clotilde said seriously, without raising her voice.

"And why not?" he asked, annoyed, as he got up from the table.

"You know why, Napoleon. My father is an excommunicate and the Queen of Holland is a Protestant."

The Prince's eyes flared. "Excommunicate! Protestant!

So what? If they can't be the godparents, then there will be no baptism! It's only a lot of fanfare anyhow and, as you know, I detest public show. I was only permitting it to satisfy you."

Partly because of her physical condition, partly from the strain of the psychological crisis through which she had passed, Clotilde burst into tears and ran out of the room.

The next evening a calm but determined husband met the eyes of an equally calm and determined wife across the dinner table.

It was the Prince who broached the subject again. "I am sorry about last night, Clotilde, but there is no necessity to become disturbed. I have found a priest who will baptize our little one with your father as godfather and my cousin as godmother."

"Napoleon, I will never go against my conscience in this matter. I know there are priests in your liberal camp but in these I am not interested. Only if the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris gives the dispensation for my father and your cousin will I consent. Anything else would be against my conscience."

"It's not a question of conscience, my dear. Let me remind you that I am master here. The child will bear my name and I have the right even to make him a Protestant if I want."

"You exaggerate your right, Napoleon. I have as much right over our child as you. You know I have never opposed you when it was something not involving my conscience. I will defend our child's right to his spiritual heritage and I will defend that heritage with my life if necessary."

Prince Napoleon noticed that his wife had become pale. He got up from the table and left without saying another word. . . .

Eight days later, on July 18, 1862, amid the pains of an

excruciating labor, Princess Clotilde gave birth to a baby boy. No official notices of the birth were sent out. Not even the Empress was summoned. There was no solemn baptism because the Cardinal Archbishop would not give the permission to have King Victor Emmanuel and Queen Sophie as godparents, and Clotilde would not have them without that permission. Since the Prince was somewhat mollified by the fact that there was to be no public baptismal ceremony—something he never wanted and would have permitted only if a king and a queen were godparents—the baby was privately baptized and named Victor Napoleon.

The birth of the boy sent the father into ecstasy again. Clotilde looked wan because of the suffering of the last week or so; but she too was caught up in the creative joy of parenthood. And for a while both forgot their quarrel.

Soon after the birth, Prince Napoleon wrote to George Sand:

Thank you for your congratulations! My wife and the little baby are doing well. How true it is that there are great joys which remain unknown until we have children! I play with my little doll and I love him with all my heart. I send my best wishes to Maurice [Madame Sand's son] for a similar happiness within a few months. Everything becomes more serious when one has a son. I am already thinking of his education, of making him a man, a citizen; and this is not easy in our times. I wanted the child to enter life under the auspices of his grandfather, calling him Victor, because his grandfather is the sovereign who best understands his duty and conducts himself as a patriot and *galantuomo*.

Three months later, in October, 1862, Clotilde and Prince Napoleon went to Turin to attend the wedding of Princess Maria Pia. Like her sister at the time of her mar-

riage, Maria Pia was very young, not yet fifteen years old. But in her case the man she was to marry, King Louis of Portugal, was also young, being only twenty-four. Since King Louis was a practicing Catholic and a king who possessed all the virtues of the best constitutional monarchs, Clotilde was happy that he was to be her sister's husband.

Princess Clotilde felt like a little girl again as she walked through the rooms of the Royal Palace in Turin. This was her first visit to her family since she had left them three years before. She was happy to see them all again—her father, her brothers, and Maria Pia. Her father looked stouter, Humbert and Amedeo so much taller. But her greatest joy came in seeing Oddone, her Dodo, who seemed much better and was walking without crutches and sometimes even without the aid of a cane.

As soon as the two sisters were alone, Maria Pia said to Clotilde, "Oh, tell me, Clotilde, are you happy? Is Plon-Plon good to you? I worry so much about you."

"Please don't worry, Maria. I'm happy, especially now that there is a child. Now, tell me about yourself. You're going to be a queen!"

"Oh, yes, I am so excited. Remember the day of your First Holy Communion when you said that you had asked God never to make you a queen?" Clotilde nodded as Maria Pia continued, "Well, I didn't say anything but I really wanted to be a queen. And now I am to have my wish. And Louis is so good to me."

Once when Clotilde was alone with her father, he was a little embarrassed. He realized how his eldest child must feel and he wanted to reassure her that in his heart he was still a loyal son of the Catholic Church in spite of the excommunication, in spite of the laws which his government had passed suppressing monasteries and convents which were not devoted to active works of charity.

He was the first to mention the excommunication. "Plon-

Plon has told me, Clotilde, how hard you took the news of the ecclesiastical censure of 1860."

Clotilde checked any further discussion by saying, "Papà, I don't know too much about all these things, but more than ever I am concerned about the salvation of your soul. I have prayed and will continue to pray that God will illumine and guide you."

What more could she say? She knew that anything more might be either a condemnation or a compromise, and she was not yet sure what attitude she should assume. The woman of Savoy always kept herself free of politics, and the Roman Question was intricately tied up with politics. . . .

Clotilde was glad when her husband told her in the spring of 1863 that they were both going to Egypt for a while. Ostensibly the Prince was making the trip "for his health," but Clotilde and many others knew better. The Prince had delivered a diatribe in the French Senate on March 17, 1863, condemning the Russians for their cruel treatment of the Polish insurrectionists. The French Emperor, fearful of hurting Czar Alexander II's feelings, had rebuked Prince Napoleon for "flouting all proprieties," adding, "I shall never admit that a man can talk in the Senate as freely as he can at his club, insulting everybody right and left." When the Emperor gave the Prince the choice between keeping in line with government policy or withdrawing from the imperial family, Prince Napoleon yielded to the suggestion that he go on a trip with Clotilde.

En route from Paris to Naples, Prince Napoleon and Clotilde stopped at San Rossore, near Pisa, where they had a visit with King Victor Emmanuel and Prince Eugene of Carignano. At Naples, Clotilde's aunt the Duchess of Genoa and her children were there to wish them *bon voyage* as they embarked for the Orient.

Clotilde enjoyed the cruise. The sea always seemed to

soothe her husband's irascible temperament and she found that she could get closer to him when they were away from Paris. They spent most of their vacation in Cairo, where they stayed at the palace of the Viceroy.

In a letter from Cairo to the Countess Clementine de Briançon, Clotilde wrote of her own spiritual life:

I was able to make my month in honor of our Lady; I'll also keep my month in honor of the Sacred Heart, which I shall try, however, to make a little better. In your prayers, my dear, please think of us and of my little one whom I had to leave in Paris. . . . Do not think that I have forgotten you if I do not write. I love you with all my heart and always. . . . The twentieth of June will be the feast of our dear Virgin of Consolation and the fourth anniversary of my reception into the Children of Mary. . . .

When Prince Napoleon and Clotilde returned from Egypt in July, 1863, the Emperor entertained them cordially at the Tuileries before they went to the quiet of their château at Meudon. They were still caught up in the happiness of parenthood—the baby's first teeth, the baby's first words, which Clotilde reported were, "Jesus, Mary, Papà, Mamà, and Aunt." After a few weeks at Meudon, Prince Napoleon went back to his politics; and Clotilde, to her routine life of duty and prayer.

Although Clotilde was now seeing less and less of her husband, the relationship between them in 1863 and 1864 was still happy enough. Moreover, little Victor kept Clotilde from becoming too lonely, as she wrote to the Marquise Maria della Rovere: "To return to my little angel. He is our joy. He is almost always with me and I take care of him myself as much as possible. My dear Maria, please ask the good God that my little one will be either an angel or a saint. It is my only wish for him. I assure you that I

would a thousand times prefer to lose him rather than see him not become a saint."

Ever since the total return of herself to God in 1862, Clotilde was reverting more and more to her conservative ways in dress and behavior. She seemed almost to walk on tiptoe through the glittering and tinkling salons of Paris in order to pass unnoticed. Not that there were any drastic changes; but she was more circumspect, more reserved, than she had been during the first two or three years of her married life.

Her life of prayer and charity also increased. Besides the services in her own chapel, she went frequently to the famous basilica of Notre Dame des Victoires in Paris. Almost every Saturday she went to the chapel at the Monastery des Oiseaux, where in June, 1859, she had been received into the Sodality of the Children of Mary and enrolled in the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as it was practiced there. Her husband had given her permission to go twice a week to the monastery and to go alone so that she would not have to worry about tiring her ladies in waiting. Often she spent hours in prayer in the monastery chapel, kneeling on the *prie-dieu* which the canonesses had covered with white silk and initialed in gold thread. She was once seen kneeling for seven consecutive hours before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar. And she passed the entire nights of Holy Thursday and Good Friday in prayer.

Concerning her spiritual life, she often had recourse to Sister Marie of the Cross. On October 24, 1863, she wrote:

I hope that the good God will always be able to act as master with me. When one loves, even difficulties are sweet. Even in the world, those who love are able to support so many things. And when we love with all our heart the only object of our love, should we not be able to do everything for Him? . . . I repeat now

what I say to Him almost every time that I find myself before Him when I assist at services in your monastery—that I give myself to Him like a child with whom one can do all that one wishes, like the clay which the sculptor fashions to his pleasure, like an empty vase which can be filled as one wishes; in fine, that I offer myself to Him as a holocaust and as a victim. This is all my will and I do not wish to have any other. If people in the world tasted but once the joy which the service of God brings, the world would very soon be abandoned.

I can on this point and on many others offer myself as an example of the mercy of the Heart of Jesus. The more I think of myself the more I see that my whole life has been an incontestable proof of the love and mercy of the Heart of Jesus.

In the middle of November, 1863:

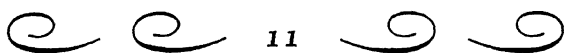
Here we are at Compiègne since yesterday. We shall be here until Thursday the seventeenth. I am here through duty and I assure you that all this worldliness does not tempt me at all. Thanks be to God for all that has happened to me. I have always found my only happiness in God.

To prayer she added the corporal works of mercy. She had an almoner who dispensed to charity much of her personal allowance, and every day she visited the sick in the wards of a hospital near the Palais-Royal.

Although Prince Napoleon had told Clotilde at the beginning of their marriage that he would leave her free in her moral and religious life, he was beginning to be irritated by many of the details of her personal schedule. He now told her that when he was present for meals at the Palais-Royal, she could observe the law of abstinence on Fridays only; and that if she did more, he would go out to eat. As a

consequence, she had to obtain a dispensation for the vigils and for the Ember and Lenten days when he was going to be at meals with her.

When their second child, Louis Napoleon, was born on July 16, 1864, Prince Napoleon thought that this would lead Clotilde to give herself more to his way of thinking. Instead, the second child increased Clotilde's sense of dedication of both herself and her children to God.



THE CLOUDS DESCEND

Soon after the private baptism of their second child, Clotilde began to notice a change in her husband's attitude towards her personally. With a very few exceptions there were no scenes. He did not mistreat her except occasionally to upbraid her with, "If only you had the one hundredth part, only a hundredth part of the enlargement of mind and heart of George Sand!" It was only that the abysmal incompatibility between Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde was beginning to show.

At first Prince Napoleon had thought that he could form to his own liking the mind and heart of his young wife. It did not take him long, however, to sense that she was sweetly but firmly resisting his intrusions on her convictions and ideals. If not always in words, she knew how to indicate to him that if her body was his, her conscience was her own, and her soul was God's.

By 1865 or 1866 Prince Napoleon was convinced that Clotilde would never divest herself of a mentality which he considered narrow, medieval, fossilized, the mentality in which she had been born and reared. In his judgment a woman who objected to having the *Revue des deux mondes*

in her apartment would never become the woman of power he wanted her to be—a woman free of what he termed prejudices, a woman without preconceptions and scruples, a woman adhering to no limitations imposed by a dogmatic religion.

Clotilde knew that the dawn of her happy girlhood and the noonday of the happy beginnings of her wedded life were over, that it was now twilight—and that the night would be long. She also knew that her husband's good will to mend his ways was gradually becoming a thing of the past. Already his old habits were repossessing him. Already he was re-experiencing the attractions of the Parisian world of beautiful and sophisticated women.

By 1865 Clotilde had enough pieces to be able to reconstruct the jigsaw puzzle of her husband's former life. There had been others besides Rachel, the celebrated tragedienne who, as Clotilde regretfully learned, never did embrace Christianity. Clotilde had learned this from her husband one day when the name of Rachel had inadvertently come up between them, and Prince Napoleon had laughed at the idea that Rachel had been baptized on her deathbed. Rachel was dead and gone, but the others were still living. There was Madame Arnould Plessy, the beautiful and popular actress of the Comédie Française, who still loved Prince Napoleon madly. When Prince Napoleon married Clotilde, he had broken his relations with Madame Plessy abruptly and somewhat rudely, so much so that George Sand, who was a friend of both, wrote to Prince Napoleon, taking him to task: "I don't care if people say of you, 'He loves women too much,' but I would regret their saying of you, 'He is ungrateful toward those who have truly loved him; he has in his blood something brutal which prevents his distinguishing between a heart and a *cotillon*.'"

Actually Prince Napoleon was very faithful to his flames, even after the flame of his passion for a woman had cooled. He felt a sense of loyalty to those whom he had once loved. This is why Rachel sent for him when she was dying—to entrust to his care a son whom she had had by someone else, a trust which Prince Napoleon accepted and fulfilled for years after Rachel's death. Almost the last of Rachel's conscious acts had been to remove a pink scarf from her neck and request that it be sent to Prince Napoleon. This scarf Prince Napoleon kept in a showcase, along with two other Rachel relics (a white straw hat trimmed with black ribbon and feathers, and a blue satin buskin embroidered in silver and gold); and this showcase he had for all the world to see in the Palais-Royal.

Slowly Prince Napoleon also removed himself socially from Princess Clotilde. At dinners and receptions at the Palais-Royal he greeted his wife when he entered a salon in which she happened to be present and then immediately began conversing with the others. Sometimes he did not even make any gesture of recognition toward her. If there happened to be present some whom he particularly liked, he began to indulge in all forms of bantering, acting as if she were not present. At receptions and balls at the Tuileries or elsewhere, he accompanied her whenever it pleased him to do so. Often he would depart before the function was over, without even telling her that he was leaving. Sometimes she had to go alone to the Tuileries, when he refused to go to a function which she felt both of them would be expected to attend. If something annoyed him while they were at the theater, he would leave their private box and not return for her. If they did return together to the Palais-Royal, he often decided to go somewhere else but told his wife to go to her apartment. The "somewhere else"

was usually the salons of the Comédie Française, which was adjacent to the Palais-Royal and where his former flames, including Madame Plessy, gathered for their nights of frivolity. Often as she knelt in prayer in her private chapel, Clotilde could hear the peals of laughter as they drifted out of the open windows of the Comédie Française; and among them she could distinguish the voice of her husband.

People began to notice, to comment. They said that the Prince no longer dined with his wife, that entire days passed without his seeing her, that she was sometimes forced to write to him if she wanted anything. A few blamed Clotilde's reserve for her husband's disaffection. After a reception at the Tuileries, Queen Sophie of Holland wrote to Princess Matilde concerning Clotilde: "A princess with the frown of a Chinese won't get very far in France." But the majority defended Clotilde. Even Princess Matilde, who once had labeled Clotilde as a bigot, blamed her brother: "Alas, I know him well. Napoleon is an impossible being and Franconièr himself, his aide-de-camp, is beginning to be annoyed with him. You can't imagine how he treats his poor wife, with what rudeness he speaks to her. Yesterday, at the Tuileries, seeing that she was enjoying herself at the dance, he took her away before eleven o'clock. When I tried to remonstrate, he said to me, 'At my house, where I enjoy myself, I go to bed at eleven. It should therefore be permissible for me to go away at the same hour from here, where I only become infuriated.' "

All the members of her husband's circle admired Clotilde even though they knew she would never accept their ideas. George Sand wrote to Prince Napoleon: "We are of the excommunicated but don't tell Princess Clotilde. There is no necessity to make angels cry. I love her. Her simplicity of manner, the sweet attractions of her personality have completely won me. She is an image of candor. And I

confess that all the good which had been told me concerning her is not really too much."

Years later Emile Ollivier was to sum up the opinions of "Renan, Sainte-Beuve and company" in these words:

We all had for her the greatest respect and most sincere admiration. Ernest Renan used to say to me in those days, "The Princess Clotilde is one of the most remarkable figures at the court of Prince Napoleon. In her appears the characteristic spirit of the House of Savoy." This was also the opinion of Sainte-Beuve, who considered the Princess "a woman of great judgment and feeling." From her there was never a word, never a phrase which indicated affectation. She passed through the vicissitudes of life with such sweet steps that they were all the more firm for not being high-sounding. She had no need to draw herself up in order to be impressive. Without effort she obtained the homage of all who came near her, all the more the less she seemed to seek it.

Every time that I spoke to her of daily events I was astounded by the perspicacity and solidity of her good sense. Her judgments were sure, almost infallible; and so much security arose from the inflexibility of a conscience which was very religious. She possessed also the faculties of the mystics, who understand human affairs the more they are detached from them.

Clotilde's detachment, as Ollivier indicates, was not indifference. She was quick to observe and judge. When Renan's book *Vie de Jésus* appeared in 1863, she wrote to Canon Gazelli: "You must have heard of Renan's *Vie de Jésus*. What horror! Poor man, how I pity him. But I tell you for our comfort that his book has made some conversions. This may seem hard to understand but it is so. One conversion was a Jew at the point of death, and there have been others. . . . Here in Paris there have never

been so many New Testaments sold as are now being sold."

There was truth in the charge that Clotilde was reserved and somewhat cold in her interviews with those who came on official visits. With a lady in waiting and a cavalier of honor, she usually held these official interviews in one of the largest and most formally appointed salons of the Palais-Royal. The interviews were short, quite formal, and it is said that she spoke in a soft, low voice, almost as if she were in church.

But this was not the natural conduct of Clotilde, for although self-disciplined, she was warm and affectionate by nature. With those who shared her ideas of life, she was simple, free, loving, almost gay, in both her conversations and her letters. For example, when she was in New York City, she wrote to Sister Marie of the Cross:

Be assured that although far from all I forget none of you. You will see on my return that one does not lose the memory of those whom one loves. I shall see all of you again with so much joy, like an ancient dove returning to its dovecote after a long absence. I feel happy just thinking of that moment! In my imagination I see again all my good Mothers and I see myself being presented from one to the other and all the Sisters overcome in seeing me again! It will be a great day when I shall see again all my loved ones in the convent. Be assured that as soon as I arrive in Paris I will hasten to you.

It was only in the presence of those whom she knew to be hostile to her ideas and ideals that she tended to withdraw within herself, for with them she could not be her natural self and Clotilde did not know how to simulate. Hence, her seeming coldness was only a mask to hide the suffering within. She once confessed about herself: "Another grace which the Lord has given me is that of being able to hide

within myself the troubles, the griefs, the sorrows I feel, in such a way that not only does no one know of them but everyone thinks I feel nothing. Instead, the Lord knows how very sensitive I am."

So if her conduct annoyed her husband, his conduct pained her. But of her sufferings she never spoke; neither did she ever criticize Prince Napoleon orally or by letter. Her letters to her relatives and friends—and Clotilde wrote hundreds of letters, of which over two thousand pages are extant—speak only of her love of God and of people, of her devotion to her children, of her obligations, of her happiness even.

To Canon Gazelli she wrote shortly after the birth of her first child: "Especially now that I am a mother of a family, how much better I ought to be in order to obtain the necessary graces to rear holily that little angel Victor." When Victor was two years old, she wrote: "I brought Victor to Benediction on Monday after Easter and he was very good. Every morning and evening we say prayers together. In other words, I try to rear him as well as I can."

Only to a very trusted friend did she once allude to the difficulties she was having with her husband:

I assure you that I do not know if there is in the world a more complicated position than mine. Only by force of reflection, prayer, patience, gentleness, resignation, and absolute abnegation on my part do I succeed in going forward. I am persuaded that if I did not do all that I can, we would soon find ourselves on opposite roads, one to the right and the other to the left. Nevertheless, it is necessary that I keep trying. I try to do my duty, to be good, to give in so long as it is possible. . . . Sometimes I feel like crying but I try not to cry. I do not regret, I shall never regret my marriage, being persuaded that God willed it. I was His

instrument and I desire to be His instrument in everything that He wishes. I abandon myself to Him, to His Most Sacred Heart so that He may do with me what He wills, so that He may act like the painter who paints what he wants on his canvas. I am content to live and I would be content to die: it seems to me that I shall always be content with everything. Certainly if I died, it would be better for me, for I would not offend the Lord so much. But I would never ask God for this. He knows what is useful for me. May He dispose of me as He wishes. I fear nothing except sin, and this I do not fear enough. I think I understand very well what Saint Teresa meant when she said, "To suffer or to die."

I think I would find life long if I had nothing to suffer.

If someone spoke to me of sacrificing my life, not even this would be a sacrifice for me because I am not attached to life. One thing alone draws me—the Lord!

The world as such I detest wholeheartedly; therefore, what have I to sacrifice? I have my family, yes; but before all else, there is the Will of God.

The world is full of wickedness. One hears of so many follies. There are so many infamies committed that I can hardly believe them.

I am convinced in my heart that one day my husband will be converted. But if the Lord should wish my death before this grace is granted, I would be content. If for this grace, God should demand the sacrifice of my children, I would be willing. To sacrifice my life completely would not seem too much in order to save his soul.

Not only did Clotilde not criticize her husband; she defended him whenever she could. There had been rumors that Prince Napoleon attended the sacrilegious banquets which were held in Paris on Good Fridays. Clotilde vehemently denied that her husband took part in such indecent

performances, adding that some people wanted to make him out worse than he was.

But while the relations between Clotilde and her husband were becoming strained, the relations between the Prince and the Emperor improved a little, at least for a short while. The Emperor indicated this improvement by naming Prince Napoleon as vice president of the Privy Council of the Empire. It was in this capacity that the Emperor, who in May, 1865, was preparing to leave for Algeria, sent Prince Napoleon as his delegate to the dedication of a monument to Napoleon I and his brothers in the city of Ajaccio, the capital of Corsica. The Prince went to Ajaccio with the best of intentions but when it came time for him to speak, his customary impetuosity led him to inveigh against what he called the false interpretation of dynastic right. He repeated what he had enunciated three years before in the French Senate; namely, that he did not believe in the divine right of kings, that a king or emperor was made by the will of the people, and that when it was no longer the will of the people, the dynasty no longer had any right to rule.

For this speech Prince Napoleon was promptly reprovved by a letter from the Emperor, who was still in Algeria but who had been kept informed of the Prince's doings by the Empress. Hurt and infuriated by the rebuke, Prince Napoleon immediately resigned his position as president of the General Council and decided to leave Paris for good and retire with his family to his villa in Prangins, Switzerland.

When Clotilde, who was with her two children at Meudon, heard of her husband's Draconian decision, she was disturbed. She wrote to Sister Marie of the Cross:

Napoleon came last night but has left again. We discussed matters. Today I have not seen him but he has

written me a few words to tell me that there is nothing new this morning, that he has many things to take care of in order to be ready with everything, and that tomorrow he will tell me what he has decided. Let us ask the Heart of Jesus that the decision be for His glory, first and before everything else, then for the good of all, but especially for the soul of our dear Napoleon. This is my prayer. I am afraid that he allows himself to be taken up too much with the desire of breaking every tie with the Tuileries, of putting himself apart, of going to Prangins.

You know that whatever happens will be God's Will for me. Anything can happen in a moment such as this, in a situation so tense. It is for this reason that I beg your prayers.

Clotilde tried to make her husband understand that once they left France it would be difficult ever to return. The Prince eventually agreed with his wife's reasoning; instead of going to Switzerland for good, he, Clotilde, and their son Victor went to Turin for a visit in October, 1865. It was the first visit to the land of his mother for the three-year-old Prince Victor Napoleon.

Notwithstanding that Turin was no longer the capital of Italy, the King and his family retained the Royal Palace and were there a great part of the time. The change of capital from Turin to Florence had been part of the "September Convention" signed at Turin in 1864 whereby Napoleon III agreed to withdraw gradually the French troops from Rome. In return Victor Emmanuel II had agreed to make Florence the capital of Italy, to protect the papal frontier from foreign attacks, and to cease protesting against the Pope's army unless it were increased so as to threaten the Italian kingdom.

At the Royal Palace in Turin, Clotilde was happy to see again her father, her brothers, and the old servants. Two

were missing: Maria Pia, who was in Portugal, and Oddone, who was in Genoa. Her youngest brother had been sent there by his doctors in the hope that the sea air would improve his health.

Clotilde had a premonition that she would never see Oddone again if she did not take the opportunity of going to Genoa now that she was in Italy. Her husband consented and she had the happiness of spending eight days with her youngest brother, on one of which they received Holy Communion together.

They talked about many things—of Oddone's archaeological collection on which he had been working for many years and which he was going to leave to the city of Genoa, of their childhood days at the Royal Palace in Turin. And they talked of death.

Oddone was unafraid to talk of death, of his own approaching death. "Remember," he said to his sister, "when I was little and I asked you, what is death, and you answered, death is an angel? Well, that is what I think death is—an angel to conduct us to a fuller life, to a more beautiful life. I have not been unhappy, Clotilde, because I have been an invalid all my life. It seems to me that one can love God in any situation or condition of life. It's the loving that is important. Nothing else matters."

Clotilde noticed that Oddone was very controlled when they kissed good-bye although both knew that this would be the last time they would see each other in life.

In December Oddone grew worse. Early in January, 1866, Clotilde received word of his death. After the first few days of overwhelming sorrow, Clotilde wrote to console those whose loss was, in a sense, more immediate than hers. To the Marquis di Negro, an instructor of Oddone, she wrote on February 19, 1866:

I have so many things to tell you since I last wrote you but it is with an afflicted heart that I come to you today. I can never express enough all my sorrow. You will understand, having known my dear Oddone. This loss is immense for all of us, in every way. . . . The good Lord and the sweet hope of the eternal happiness of our beloved deceased can alone console us. Oddone was so good, so charitable. He suffered so much! Everything makes me hope that he is already in possession of eternal glory. But we must pray always, for we can never be certain. I understand, my dear Marquis, what must be your sorrow and that of many others.

PRINCE AND EMPEROR DISAGREE

Prince Napoleon's political position at the Tuileries meanwhile was almost untenable, and the antagonism between the Prince and the Empress had reached the point where they were both using every opportunity to puncture the sensibilities of the other.

The year 1866 found the Emperor and the Prince on opposite sides diplomatically. In the Austro-Prussian War, Prince Napoleon had told Napoleon III that Prussia would win and that eventually Prussia under Bismarck would crush France; but the Emperor had insisted that Austria was the stronger and would be able to check the rise of Prussia. It was this conviction—and hope—that made the Emperor decide to remain neutral, especially when he was vaguely given to understand by Bismarck that France might seek some “compensation” in return.

Italy sided with Prussia as one way of getting the province of Venetia from the Austrians. The Italian army was defeated in the Battle of Custoza (at the same place where the Austrians had defeated the Italians in 1849), and the

Italian navy was defeated in the Battle of Lissa, off the Austrian coast of Dalmatia. The Prussian military machine, however, moved with such vigor and speed that the Austrians were irretrievably defeated at Sadowa in Bohemia on July 3, 1866.

Victor Emmanuel was humiliated by the double Italian defeat but he got a lion's share in the Treaty of Prague signed in August, 1866, whereby Austria had to cede Venetia to Italy. All that Victor Emmanuel now needed for his dream of Italy was Rome as its capital.

The other political venture on which the Emperor and Prince Napoleon had differed was that of creating an empire in the New World. It had been partly for the purpose of restoring the prestige he had lost when he failed to help the Poles in their revolt against Russia that Napoleon III launched his Mexican adventure in 1864, an adventure which was supported by the Empress but vehemently opposed by Prince Napoleon. When the conservatives in the Republic of Mexico, disturbed by conditions in their country, sought the help of France, Napoleon III persuaded Ferdinand Maximilian, Archduke of Austria, to become "Emperor of Mexico."

The Mexican venture was a failure from the moment Archduke Maximilian and his wife, the Archduchess Carlota, reached Mexican soil. And when the distraught Archduchess returned alone to Paris in August, 1866, to beg for more French help in a cause which was tragically hopeless, Prince Napoleon had further reason to look at the Emperor and Empress with his I-told-you-so expression.

The friction between Prince Napoleon and Empress Eugénie was of long standing and was partly personal and partly political since the Prince held her responsible for most of the political mistakes which her husband made. This antagonism between the Prince and the Empress had

one of its strongest outbursts on November 15, 1866, at the double celebration of Eugénie's feast day and her fortieth birthday.

The Prince had on various occasions throughout the years jokingly proposed a toast to the "Empress's forty years," a toast which used to annoy the Empress, who was eighteen years younger than the Emperor. But when at the end of the banquet held to honor the Empress's fortieth birthday the Emperor rose and said to Prince Napoleon sitting at his right, "Will you give a toast to the health of the Empress," the Prince answered, "Thank you, but I prefer to forego the privilege."

The Emperor, surprised and annoyed, retorted: "What? You do not wish to toast the Empress?"

The guests had risen to their feet and were holding their champagne-filled glasses in their hands, but the unperturbed Prince Napoleon held his ground: "If Your Majesty will permit me, I shall willingly forego the privilege."

Without another word to his cousin, the Emperor said, "Will Prince Murat please offer the toast to the Empress?"

Empress Eugénie was humiliated but not defeated. Later in the evening, as the guests gathered for conversation in one of the adjoining salons, she said to Prince Napoleon, who was standing in the center of a large group: "Have you read the last discourse of King Victor Emmanuel, your father-in-law, in which he speaks of the glorious deeds accomplished by him in so short a time? Was he perhaps referring to the Battle of Custoza?"

The Prince tried to fend off an answer by saying, "I am not responsible for my father-in-law's speeches." But when the Empress kept pressing the point, he flared back, "I prefer a defeat like Custoza which won a province to a victory like Mexico which cost an empire!"

This time the Empress was defeated in the battle of wits

with the Prince, but there would be another time. She would ask him about the Roman Question and every one in Paris knew where he stood on the question and where his wife stood. . . .

Through all these diplomatic upheavals of 1866, however, Clotilde kept aloof with her two children at the Château of Meudon, for in April of that year she had become pregnant again.

She was hoping that she would be able to breast-feed her next child (something she had not been able to do with Victor and Louis), for she felt that breast-feeding was a mother's primary obligation to her newly born child. And during Advent, as she meditated on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, she thought how much of a mystery is the incarnation of every child born into the world—of the fleshing of a human being from a tiny seed deposited in a woman's body. For in spite of the psychological and spiritual incompatibility between herself and her husband, Clotilde found meaning, fulfillment, and joy in motherhood. Once she had understood that marriage was God's Will for her, she surrendered herself totally to the demands and needs of marital love. She gave regardless of the return. There was no holding back, no half giving because of the lack on the part of the other. On one occasion she had said: "Sometimes people say that I have missed my vocation, that a monastery of Carmelites would have been better for me. But I don't think so. The Lord knows what He does, and I am content all the same."

Clotilde had a soul which was capable of finding nourishment in everything because she possessed enough love to transform everything. She felt that those things which are not immediately good are capable of becoming good if one trusts and loves God with one's total being.

Princess Clotilde gave birth to her third child, a baby

girl, on December 20, 1866. Prince Napoleon seemed happy in being a father again. "This time," he told his wife, "we shall use a real Napoleonic name. We'll call our little one Letizia after Madame Mère, my Bonaparte grandmother."

When the name Letizia was prefixed by Maria, Clotilde could hardly contain herself with joy. She could now think that her little girl was named for our Lady, *Causa Nostrae Laetitiae*. But she had to content herself with a private baptism again. . . .

After the birth of Letizia, the conjugal life of Prince Napoleon and Princess Clotilde became less and less intimate. When he was not involved in politics, the Prince was giving his time to the archaeological studies in which he had always been interested. Because of the widening differences between her husband's politics and those of the Tuileries, Clotilde absented herself from many of the imperial functions. She did, however, attend the World's Fair which was held in Paris in 1867, and to which had come practically all the crowned heads of Europe, including King Victor Emmanuel and the King and Queen of Portugal.

It was five years since Clotilde had seen her sister, Queen Maria Pia of Portugal. Maria Pia had been lonely in a foreign country and Clotilde had often written to advise and encourage her. Every letter she had written had been of the tenor of the one which she wrote from Meudon in 1866:

Tell me what you are doing. I hope you are no longer sad. . . . It is necessary to rouse oneself (it is my method) and go forward. Certainly in this world all is not rosy . . . and since it isn't, you must take courage. . . .

In your position you have greater obligations: you can do much good to your country, your husband, your

children for now and hereafter. You have a beautiful mission. Think of what Marnà was, how she was loved by all. What an example she was for us, wasn't she? Do you read? Do you work? How do you arrange your day? A schedule is a great thing in order not to get bored, I assure you. Do you concern yourself with educational institutions? I try to make use of time as much as possible. . . .

But now that Maria Pia was in Paris the sisters could hardly contain themselves with happiness. Although Clotilde had been married nine years and Maria Pia five, both were still very young—Clotilde, twenty-four; Maria Pia, twenty. They became children again in their enthusiasm as together they visited the stalls, booths, and exhibits of the fair. They examined everything from the newest locomotives and fifty-ton guns to the new metal of aluminum and the new "miracle-fuel" called *gasoline*. Like all other women, however, they lingered over the silks, woolens, and cottons on display at the booths of the textile industries, and over the new styles of straight gowns with stylishly arranged draperies, fringes, ruchings, pleats, laces, and trains, which were replacing the "wire cages" called crinolines. They were fascinated by the swarms of Cossacks, Egyptians, Arabs, Turks, Hindus, Chinese, Mexicans, and other foreigners who in their native costumes rushed back and forth between the Champ de Mars and the boulevards. They were caught up in the melodies of the Viennese waltzes as the music floated out from the various halls of the fair. They joined the other royal guests at the glittering ball given by Princess Metternich, the homely but immensely popular wife of the Austrian Ambassador to Paris. But their happiest moments came when they were alone in Clotilde's private apartment at the Palais-Royal or in the

quiet atmosphere of the Château of Meudon, a château favored by Clotilde because it had a chapel in which was reserved the Blessed Sacrament.

"O Maria," Clotilde exclaimed again and again. "I can't tell you how happy I am to see you. And you look wonderfully happy!"

"But you, Clotilde? Are you happy? What are these rumors about Plon-Plon that have reached me even in Portugal?"

Clotilde merely smiled. "You must not worry about me, Maria. I am happy because I am where God wants me. And I have three wonderful children. What more can any mother desire if she has healthy, happy children?"

Far into the nights they talked and talked and talked. . . .

When it came time for Maria Pia to return to Portugal with King Louis, they were not sad because there was something to look forward to—their meeting again, at the marriage of their eldest brother, Humbert, Prince of Piedmont, who was to marry their cousin Margherita, the Duchess of Genoa.

The marriage of Prince Humbert, the eldest son of King Victor Emmanuel II, to Margherita, the daughter of Victor Emmanuel's brother, Ferdinand, took place in the Royal Palace at Turin in April, 1868. During the four-day celebration of the royal wedding, the Holy Shroud was exposed in the Cathedral of San Giovanni. Thousands came to pray before the precious relic which was guarded day and night by two *carabinieri*. As the black silk which covered the Shroud had been worn almost to shreds, it had been decided to replace the black silk with red silk before returning the Shroud to its silver reliquary; and Clotilde had been chosen for this work. To help in the work, Clotilde chose her friend the Countess Clementine de Briançon.

On April 28, at five o'clock in the morning, the two women received Holy Communion at the Mass celebrated by Archbishop Alessandro Riccardi of Netro. Immediately after the Mass, the work of re-covering the Holy Shroud began in the presence of the Archbishop, several bishops, and the court chaplains. Dressed in a white silk gown with long sleeves and train, Clotilde knelt on the bare marble floor and with her white-gloved hands ripped off the old covering before replacing the new.

It took Clotilde three and one-half hours to sew the red covering onto the fourteen-foot-long Shroud. She did all the sewing by hand while the Countess de Brianc on knelt beside her handing her the threaded gold needles. Clotilde's face was suffused with radiance as she silently worked on the precious relic, and from time to time two tears were seen coursing down her cheeks. It was one long meditation on the infinite mercy of God for men and for her in particular. She thought of the privilege which the House of Savoy had of possessing one of the most important relics of Christendom.

The House of Savoy had had the relic since 1452, when Marguerite of Charny presented it to the House of Savoy in Chamb ry; but it was not brought to Turin until 1578, in order to facilitate its veneration by the aged Charles Borromeo, who was making a pilgrimage on foot from Milan.

When Clotilde rose from her knees at nine-thirty, her soul was filled with joy, and her memory had stored away the stains which imaged the history of Christ's passion and death. She asked and obtained permission to keep the former black covering as a relic. During the rest of her life she was often to refer to "that happy morning of April 28."

Contact with the Shroud deepened Clotilde's sense of mystery. More and more she found peace and happiness in

the contemplation of the mysteries of faith. Everything else for her was secondary, subordinate. . . .

When she heard of her father's critical illness in November of the following year, she and Prince Napoleon hastened to San Rossore, but for different reasons. The Prince wanted to be near a king for whom he had great affection and admiration; Clotilde wanted to be near a father who was under the ban of excommunication in the hope that she could be an instrument of God's always available mercy.

After the King made his peace with the Church and God, he recovered quickly. Clotilde later wrote to Countess Clementine de Briançon:

How many graces there have been, above all those touching my father! All came out well in full accord with the Cardinal Archbishop of Pisa. . . . Please thank the divine Master, my dear, for so much merciful goodness. May His adorable Heart be forever glorified. I had attached a medal of the Sacred Heart to the chain which my father wore around his neck. The chain already had a number of medals, among them being (if I am not mistaken) the medal of Saint Joseph, which your mother had given him one day.

On their return trip to Paris, Clotilde and her husband stopped at Padua, Verona, Trent, Innsbruck, Monaco, and Strasbourg. The Prince had never before visited these places, and Clotilde was always happy to have an opportunity to be with her husband.

In May, 1870, Clotilde went with her children to Meudon again, where she stayed until June 28. Then she went to take the water cure at Eaux-Bonnes while her hus-

band, with some of his scientist-friends, went on an archaeological cruise in the North Sea.

Prince Napoleon had wanted to get away from politics, at least for a while. As he had written to George Sand in the spring of 1869, in answer to her letter of condolence on the occasion of the death of one of his relatives: ". . . and when relatives and our friends, those whom we love, are gone, what remains? Sadness and almost the desire to follow them. . . . I have no projects except to go away to my country home, far from men and events, burying myself in my works, in my studies, forgetting the present and not thinking of the future."

Presumably the Prince was very happy on the cruise. As Renan, who was among the guests on the Prince's yacht, wrote to Princess Julia Bonaparte on July 11, 1870:

While traveling, the Prince is in his element. This man, who has an open mind on all things, is twenty times more impassioned in matters of research, as if urged on by an exhaustless curiosity. I have never fully appreciated, as I do now, this nature possessed by a thirst for the unknown, possessed by profound dreams which devour him, in which there always burns a vivid sentiment for truth and beauty. These five weeks spent with him will always remain a veritable feast in my memory.

The yacht *Jerome Napoleon* is the prime traveler of the world and with it we make marvelous speed. We have had a fascinating cruise along Scotland. . . . News from Europe reaches us like echoes of a distant noise. The Prince is so much a philosopher that all that we hear does not make him cut short even one stage of his journey. We hope that the peace will not be disturbed and that it will not be given to the intrigues of diplomacy to disturb the regular progress of peoples toward civilization and liberty.

But while Clotilde was at Eaux-Bonnes and her husband was cruising along the coast of Norway and the Parisians were madly pursuing their pleasures, a sick emperor declared a war which was to topple an empire.

FALL OF AN EMPIRE— AND FLIGHT

When Prince Napoleon received word that France had declared war on Prussia he exclaimed, "What madness!" and immediately gave orders that his yacht return to France. And yet the war had not come as a surprise to him. He and a few others had sensed its coming during the last ten years, but not the Emperor nor the Empress nor the pleasure-mad Parisians.

In France there had been a general discontent in both chambers of the government. No one was happy about either domestic or foreign affairs. The nationalists were still smarting under the disgrace of the Mexican venture and ever since Sadowa they had been fearful of the Prussians; the Catholics were disturbed over the Roman Question even though Napoleon III had tried to pacify them by again sending troops to protect the Pope in Rome; the liberals were clamoring for more participation in the government and insisting that the reforms of 1867 were not enough; and the republicans were opposed to any idea of an empire.

Notwithstanding the May, 1870, plebiscite which gave Napoleon III a seven-to-one vote of confidence, the spirit of the first and second republics was stirring again and awakening the sleeping giant of the masses. One heard again the singing of the *Marseillaise* at the Opera and even during an official dinner of the Emperor at Saint-Cloud.

The immediate cause of the war was Bismarck's garbled account of the King of Prussia's refusal of the French demand that a Hohenzollern never be permitted to become a candidate for the throne of Spain. The garbled account, which was embodied in the publicized dispatch of the Ems telegram, gave the Germans the impression that the Prussian King had been insulted by the French Ambassador and gave the French the impression that their Ambassador had been insulted by the Prussian King. This ambiguous impression was exactly what Bismarck intended. As he had foreseen, the publicized dispatch acted "on the Gallic bull like a red rag."

On July 15, 1870, Napoleon III and the French Parliament acquiesced to the demands of an aroused people and formally declared war against Prussia.

One of the basic causes of the war between France and Prussia, however, was Napoleon III himself—his decline as a leader, a decline which was the effect of his deterioration as man. Napoleon III was in constant pain from frequent bladder attacks; and although his mind was still clear, he had lost the initiative and self-confidence which had enabled him to build the enviable France of the Second Empire. Ironically the Empress seemed not to realize the change in the sallow-faced Emperor as he went off to war with the fourteen-year-old Prince Imperial at his side. She was all confidence, bubbling with energy, as she bade him good-bye. "Louis," she kept saying to him, "we have all the chances that one can count on in human affairs. Things can only go well."

But things could not go well for the French and no one knew this better than Prince Napoleon. When the Emperor asked the Prince to go to Florence in order to try to persuade King Victor Emmanuel II to declare himself for France and induce Austria to do likewise, he at first refused, being enough of a realist to know beforehand that neither Italy nor Austria would be inclined to declare war against Prussia. Moreover, Victor Emmanuel was still annoyed at the Emperor for restationing French troops in Rome, and Austria was still remembering Sadowa. It was only when the Emperor ordered Prince Napoleon in the name of the obedience he owed his sovereign and in the name of his devotion to France that the Prince took the letter which the Emperor gave him and left for Italy.

Meanwhile the French people were blaming their government for the unhappy state of affairs and already there were factions instigating an internal revolt. As soon as King Victor Emmanuel learned of the conditions in Paris, he sent there a most trusted envoy, Marquis Spinola, with a letter for his daughter.

When the Marquis handed Clotilde her father's letter on the morning of August 25, he added that her husband concurred in the King's opinion that she should leave Paris at once. Clotilde listened carefully to what Marquis Spinola had to say, then answered that her sudden departure might provoke the decisive fall of the Empire and forever stain the name of her husband and that of her children. She told the Marquis that she would provide for the safety of her children immediately but that her conscience would not permit her to leave as yet. On that same day Clotilde wrote a letter and gave it to the Marquis to take back to her father. The letter read:

Paris, Thursday, August 25, 1870

My dearest Papà,

I received this morning your letter of the twenty-

second brought to me by Marquis Spinola. Thank you for your letter and for your counsels. I assure you, however, that things are not at the point which you and my husband think. Rather things are going better; the Marquis Spinola himself is rather surprised to find things thus.

I assure you that it is not the moment for me to leave. I realize that it is your affection for me which makes you urge my departure; but be convinced, dear Papà, that it is not necessary. Moreover, my departure would have the worst and most deplorable effect. I do not keep this from you, for I know what is said and thought here.

I have not the least fear: I do not think that it is even possible for me to be afraid. What should I be afraid of? And why? It is my duty to remain here as long as I can. I must remain and die here if necessary; one must not flee when faced with danger. I am French; I cannot abandon my country. When I married, although I was very young, I knew what I was doing. And I did so because I wanted to do it. The good of my husband, of my children, of my country demands that I remain here; and if I may add, the honor of my name and even of your honor, dear Papà, and the honor of my native country. I tell you all this only after having thought it over. You know me, dear Papà, that nothing will make me neglect my duty, and I would be negligent if I departed at this time. I do not cling to the world, to riches, to the position which I have. I have never clung to these things, dear Papà. I have only desired to fulfill, to the very end, my duty. When I can no longer do so, I shall leave. I shall not commit any imprudence, for I realize it would be foolish to do anything imprudent; so be at peace. My children are safe and this is enough for me. If I leave now, perhaps neither my husband nor my children will ever be able to re-enter France. This is not just a notion or an illusion which I have but the truth.

Reflect and think over all this, dear Papà, and I am convinced you will agree that I am right. You would not leave; my brothers would not leave; Maria would not leave. I am not a princess of the House of Savoy for nothing! Do you remember what is said of princes who leave their country? To leave when one's country is in danger is to incur dishonor and disgrace forever.

If I leave we can do nothing but hide ourselves. In moments of danger, one must have energy and courage. I have them—the Lord has given them to me and He will continue to do so.

Pardon me, dear Papà, if perhaps I speak too freely but I cannot help saying what I feel, what I have in my heart. I love you too much, I respect you too much, to speak otherwise.

Your Kekina has grown up, dear Papà. Judgment, experience—both have grown and here are the results. But be assured that at Paris as at Turin, and in exile—always and wherever I shall be—your Kekina will always think of you, always pray for you.

Good-bye, dearest Papà. I cannot adequately express my affection for you. Embracing you to my heart, I say that always I am your most affectionate and respectful daughter,

MARIA CLOTILDE

P.S. Be convinced that Mamà approves my decision.

When the King received his daughter's letter on August 28, he was so profoundly moved that he could hardly speak to his ministers at the meeting held in the afternoon. At the end of the meeting, when Quintino Sella, one of the ministers, approached him with some decrees to be signed, the King took his daughter's letter from his pocket, gave it to Sella and said, "You who love beautiful things, read this." The minister went near the window to read the letter while the King was at his desk signing the decrees. Having finished reading the letter, Sella approached the King and

said to him, "Your Majesty, I am a poor devil but I will give you a thousand *lire* if you will give me this letter."

Taking back his letter, the King said smilingly, "I will give it to you as a gift when we shall be in Rome."

"On the word of a king the letter is mine, Your Majesty, because to Rome we will most certainly go," retorted Sella.

The other ministers had meanwhile crowded around the King and Sella, and they too wanted to read the noble letter which Clotilde had written to her father.

Less than a week later, on September 2, the French army suffered a decisive defeat at Sedan on the Meuse River in northeast France. Napoleon III was taken prisoner and with his own hands consigned his sword to the King of Prussia.

The news of the defeat fell upon Paris like a sudden thunderstorm, and during the night between September 3 and 4, in an excited meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, the left wing demanded the fall of the empire which had brought dishonor to France. The next morning the Third Republic was proclaimed.

Outside the Tuileries on the morning of September 4 the crowds gathered shouting, "Long live the Republic! Down with that Spanish woman!" Inside the palace the anguished Empress was saying, "I am not afraid. How could I get away?" When three of her ministers came to tell her that the Tuileries would be stormed any minute, she said, stamping her foot, "I was placed here by the Emperor. Here I will stay!" But the din of the mobs increased with their cries of "Death to the Spanish woman!"

It was only when Prince Richard Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador, and Count Costantino Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, arrived to tell her she must leave that the Empress acquiesced. Nigra persuaded her by saying, "Madame, for you to stay here longer will mean death for all your friends." Someone urged that the palace be defended,

but Eugénie said she did not want one drop of blood shed in defense of her person.

At one o'clock in the afternoon, Clotilde arrived at the Tuileries to see what services she could render the distraught Empress. As Clotilde was helping Eugénie to get ready, Prince Metternich and Count Nigra kept saying, "Quick, Madame, we must hurry."

When Count Nigra suggested to Clotilde that she too should leave, she answered: "I shall leave but without any hurry. I don't want to give the impression of flight. Today no, tomorrow perhaps." Count Fleury, in his *Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie*, says of Clotilde who had come to share the dangers of the Empress, "She was much loved by the Parisian populace, and ran no risk."

Wrapped in a dark cloak and wearing a black bonnet with a black veil over her face, the Empress walked along the Grand Gallery in the Louvre, then crossed the Square Room and the Gallery of Apollo. In the Hall of the Seven Fireplaces she stopped and made her last farewells. With the two ambassadors and one lady companion, Madame Lebreton-Bourbaki, Eugénie finally stepped out into the vaulted sidewalk of the colonnade. The four walked along to the Place Saint Germain-l'Auxerrois where they found a ramshackle cab which Nigra had hailed. At that moment a ragamuffin cried out at the top of his voice, "Ah, the Empress, the Empress!" But Nigra silenced him by putting his hand over the boy's mouth, then literally thrust the two women into the cab.

They drove from door to door among houses of friends, but no one was at home. They finally came to the apartment of Eugénie's American dentist, Doctor Evans, who sheltered the Empress for the night before proceeding with her to England.

But while the Empress was escaping safely from the

Tuileries, Clotilde returned unafraid to the Palais-Royal. Clotilde's three children had already been taken to their villa at Prangins in Switzerland by Baron Brunet, and her husband was safe in Florence. As for herself she would wait and see.

Back at the Palais-Royal she sent for General Louis Jules Trochu, the governor of Paris. He found her in her habitual calmness. When he told her that she should leave, she agreed and gave orders to her servants to arrange for her departure the next day. At the insistence of Count Nigra, who had meantime come to the Palais-Royal, she also agreed to spend the night at the Italian Embassy. But that afternoon she went unafraid to the College of Notre Dame, near the Monastery des Oiseaux, to arrange for the immediate departure of a young girl there whom she knew. The girl, who was somewhat embarrassed at the idea of the Princess remaining behind, kept her eyes cast down as she said good-bye to her benefactor. Clotilde laughingly said to the girl, "If you don't look at me, how can I know the color of your eyes?" Encouraged by the Princess's informality, the girl said, "Madame, you make me depart, and will you remain?" With a smile Clotilde answered, "For us it is better to stay; we will not leave until the last extremity."

The next morning, September 5, Clotilde returned to the Palais-Royal to attend Mass, after which she paid a visit to the hospital nearby and to the Monastery des Oiseaux. Then taking a leaflet on which were printed some maxims—among them being this one, "To suffer every evil in the present life rather than consent to any sin"—she wrote the following:

My life henceforth will be a complete *immolation* of heart, of body, of my feelings, of my affections, of *everything*, through love of You, O my Jesus. Make

me distrust myself. But make me energetic, totally consecrated to the care of my children—that I may suffer for them. And you, O Mary, my good Mother, watch over them.

I shall be happy to be your victim, O my good Jesus, if this be pleasing to You. I have always sought to do my duty in the manner in which You wished. Grant that I may continue to do it where and how You wish it. Amen.

Then she slowly descended the grand stairway of the Palais-Royal, at the foot of which the National Guards stood at attention. She motioned to the two officers, who were standing at the head of the guards. When they reached her, she put out her ungloved hand to bid them good-bye. "I am happy to grasp for the last time the hands of two French soldiers."

Count Nigra was awaiting her at the door. He had reason to be nervous, for he had received a letter from her father in which the impetuous King Victor Emmanuel had written, "You will answer for the safety of my daughter with your head."

Clotilde insisted on riding in her ordinary carriage, with the seal of the Second Empire on its doors and with the two coachmen in their customary livery. With her were also several ladies of her court. When one of them suggested that the windows of the carriage be raised so she would not be recognized, Clotilde refused, answering with the memorable words, "Savoy and Fear have never encountered each other."

As the imperial carriage proceeded through the avenues and boulevards of Paris, she was recognized; but the crowds only made their customary curtsy to a princess whom they had learned to revere as a model of duty and virtue.

At the Gare de Lyon, the Princess stepped out of the

carriage on the arm of Admiral la Roncière. She was met by General Franconièrre (the aide-de-camp to Prince Napoleon) and by Mademoiselle de Cabrières, who were to escort her to the frontier. When the coachmen asked if they might say good-bye, Clotilde's eyes filled with tears. It was the first time in the last two days of tension that she allowed her feelings to show. On their arrival at Cenisio she found her brother Amedeo, who embraced her warmly. But when she arrived at the station in Turin she found an irate husband awaiting her. He wanted to know, why hadn't she left immediately, why had she lingered in a city which was ready for a revolution?

"My conscience would not permit me to leave before the Empress. Neither could I leave under conditions which would give the impression that I was fleeing. I am sorry, Napoleon, but I acted as prudently as I could."

"Your conscience, your conscience, your conscience! I am getting sick and tired of 'your conscience.' I think we had better get a separation."

Clotilde said nothing. This was not the first time that he had made such a threat.

But there was also a telegram from her father awaiting her at Turin. Having heard of the particulars of her departure from Paris, King Victor Emmanuel had sent his daughter this wire: "I thank you for what you have done for the honor of our House." It was signed, "Papà."

Clotilde stayed only several days in Turin before she departed for Prangins in Switzerland.

The political situation in Italy was tense, and Clotilde did not want to become involved even remotely in the imminent seizure of Rome by the Italian government. Now that the French troops were no longer protecting the Pope in Rome, there was nothing to keep Victor Emmanuel from marching in and taking possession of the city. In dire

need of every soldier he could muster, Napoleon III had withdrawn his garrisons from Civitavecchia, the port for Rome, on August 4.

On September 8 the Italian government sent Count Ponza di San Martino to Pope Pius IX with an ultimatum: either agree to the peaceful occupation of Rome or it will be taken by force. On that same day King Victor Emmanuel sent a private letter to the Pope, entreating him for the good of Italy and the Church to consent to the official request of his government.

Pope Pius IX rejected the ultimatum because he felt in conscience that he had no right to alienate the property which the Church had acquired through the centuries. On September 19 the seventy-year-old Pontiff with the flowing white hair ascended on his knees the stairs of the *Scala Santa* and from there addressed the papal troops assembled in the Piazza of the Lateran. He told them that there was to be only token resistance against the attack of Rome, sufficient to show that he was yielding to force. The next morning, September 20, the bombardment began around the walls of Rome, and the Piedmontese General Cadorna effected his triumphant entry at Porta Pia. That afternoon an armistice was signed by General Cadorna and by General Kanzler of the papal army. The previous night the Pope had made himself a voluntary prisoner in the Vatican, and for almost sixty years thereafter every succeeding pope was to confine himself to the limits of the Vatican.

The next year, 1871, the Italian government announced Rome as the capital of Italy; and Pope Pius IX promulgated his excommunication of all the usurpers of the former papal city. The Italian Parliament passed the Law of Guarantees, giving the Pope exclusive use of three palaces—the Vatican, the Lateran, and Castel Gandolfo—plus an annual pension of six hundred thousand dollars. But it also

passed laws confiscating church property and suppressing many monasteries; and the government claimed the right of veto over the appointments of bishops to Italian sees except in the six dioceses close to Rome, which were sees of cardinal bishops. The Pope refused to recognize the laws or to accept the pension.

Clotilde wept bitterly over the new break between her father and the Church. She had been happy in 1867 when the relations between the Italian government and the Holy See had seemed to improve, for in that year the government no longer demanded that papal missives be subject to the state's *exequatur*, and renounced its practice of nominating bishops and of requiring an oath of fidelity to the King from bishops who were citizens of Rome. Now a new excommunication had been placed on her father. This new excommunication seemed to Clotilde to possess an even weightier censure, for the recent Vatican Council had declared as doctrine the infallibility of the Pope.

EXILE AT PRANGINS

In Prangins, Clotilde tried to adapt her life as best she could. Prangins is a tiny place, about a mile and a half from the town of Nyon in the canton of Lausanne. Near the ancient castle of Prangins was their beautiful villa, La Bergerie, which Prince Napoleon had built in 1869. Surrounded by a wall with three magnificent entrances, the estate of two hundred acres included groves of oak trees, meadows, vineyards, streams, and a beach facing Lake Geneva. La Bergerie was Prince Napoleon's favorite residence and he had filled it with collections of art and science which he had gathered during his travels throughout the world. On the grounds was also a chalet which the Prince had used for the guests whom he could not with propriety bring into the villa while his wife happened to be there. Clotilde had from time to time vacationed at La Bergerie. She loved the solitude and the quiet, for it was out in the country; but she would have loved La Bergerie more if there had been a Catholic church nearby. There was no chapel in the villa and the nearest Catholic church was in Nyon.

For the first time in her life Clotilde could no longer at-

tend daily Mass and other exercises of piety. She attended the nine o'clock high Mass on Sundays and, if circumstances permitted, the low Mass on one or two mornings during the week in the one and only Catholic church in Nyon. During the Sunday morning Mass she used to occupy an ordinary pew except that hers had been placed in front of the choir. To her right sat her two sons when they were in Prangins; to her left, Letizia and the Baroness Barbier, the only lady-companion that Clotilde had at Prangins. After the Mass the Baroness took the children outside while their mother continued her thanksgiving for at least twenty minutes. Madame Achard James, who lived at Prangins during the time that Clotilde was there, testified that the Princess in her black dress and hat looked like a nun, and that on every Sunday of five consecutive winters she had worn the same dress of black velours and satin.

So as not to annoy her husband, Clotilde tried to arrange her visits to the church during the week so that she could include them whenever she was in Nyon for other purposes, such as taking one of the children to the dentist or making necessary purchases for her household. The one carriage which they had at La Bergerie was not always at her disposal, but at three o'clock every Saturday afternoon the townspeople of Nyon used to see an empty carriage with the seal of the Second Empire on its doors and the coachman in his livery of green and gold either riding through the streets or waiting outside the Catholic church while the Princess was inside for confession or a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. If the carriage was not available, Clotilde walked to and from the church. On the mornings when she went to Holy Communion she often remained fasting until noon or she would bring a piece of bread with her which she ate before starting back.

The winters in Nyon are severe—deep snows and freez-

ing temperatures—and on the worst days Clotilde had to content herself with praying in a corner of her bedroom where she had arranged a makeshift oratory with a picture of the Sacred Heart on a small table and a *prie-dieu* before it.

Clotilde was twenty-seven years old in 1870 and the next eight years in Prangins were to be the most trying years of her life, years of increasing estrangement from her husband and of inner trials approximating the dark night of the soul described by Saint John of the Cross. External disappointments and misfortunes were to add to her suffering. But everything combined could never disrupt her inner detachment, peace, and confidence.

The first trial came when Prince Napoleon placed their elder son, Victor, now eight years old, in a Protestant school in Vevey, an hour and a half by train from Nyon. This was something which caused Clotilde real concern. She herself was finding it difficult to adjust to a Protestant ambience in which there was nothing of the devotional warmth which had surrounded her from her earliest years. To permit her child to be reared in a Protestant school was even harder to bear. With what solicitude she tried to instruct him in the fundamentals of his faith on the weekends when he was permitted to come home. She listened to his recitation of the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the blessings before and after meals.

And for the first time Clotilde knew what it was to be faced with financial problems. Not only had they left much of their wealth in Paris but practically all that they had left would never be theirs again. The Palais-Royal and their château at Meudon, along with the Tuileries, had been destroyed during the upheavals in Paris after the fall of the Second Empire. Moreover, as Prince Napoleon wrote to George Sand, whatever had not been burned by the incen-

diaries had been confiscated by the French government. Clotilde was heartbroken when she heard of the atrocities committed during the rule of the Commune and of the provisional government. Among the seventeen thousand persons executed were women and children, the Archbishop of Paris, five Jesuits, and five Dominicans.

To help meet expenses, Prince Napoleon soon sold the villa at Prangins and part of the land to a wealthy Englishman, and he and his family lived in the chalet while a new but less sumptuous La Bergerie was built on the remaining land. In a letter to George Sand, the Prince wrote concerning his status: "I live in absolute retirement. I have sold part of my land in order to live and educate my children. I want to be poor, but above all I want to be independent. Often I hold the world in disdain, for I see nothing but evil everywhere. The albatross which I had around my neck weighed me down and to be rid of it is the only joy that I feel. I will never resume it no matter what happens."

In the beginning Prince Napoleon seemed satisfied to spend most of his time corresponding, making notes, studying. Before long, however, Clotilde noticed the old restlessness in him again. Early in 1871 he went to London but Clotilde remained in Prangins, taking care of her two younger children and attending to the affairs of the house. In spite of her reduced personal allowance, she found the means to help the poor and sick in the environs of Prangins, especially those in the hospital.

With her husband away she felt freer to go to the church in Nyon where the pastor, the Abbé Gignoux, did all he could for his royal and fervent penitent. It was at his suggestion that Clotilde decided to become a Dominican tertiary in the spring of 1871. She had thought of becoming a Franciscan tertiary but when Abbé Gignoux, who was himself a Dominican tertiary, explained the nature of the

Dominican spirit, she decided that this was more suited to her temperament. Hence on April 29, 1871, the Feast of Saint Peter Martyr and the vigil of the Feast of Saint Catherine of Siena, Princess Clotilde was received as a member of the Secular Third Order of Saint Dominic, taking the name of Sister Mary Catherine of the Sacred Heart. This step brought her great spiritual consolation: it was a partial recompense for her inability to have a chapel of her own or a church near enough that she could visit it whenever she wished. Relative to her reception as a tertiary, she wrote to Sister Marie of the Cross on April 22, 1871: "I take this whole thing very seriously. It is not a question of becoming enrolled in an ordinary association. The Third Order of Saint Dominic is a real religious order since it has been approved as such by Pope Innocent VII."

When Prince Napoleon returned from London, he found a letter from King Victor Emmanuel inviting him and his family to come to Italy to live, at least during the winter months; but at first the proposition was acceptable to neither Prince Napoleon nor to Clotilde. Prince Napoleon did not like the idea of being dependent upon his father-in-law. As he wrote to George Sand, ". . . this is repugnant to me and goes against my independence since for the last twenty years I have been accustomed to give, not to receive."

Clotilde found the idea repugnant for an entirely different reason. Ever since her father had moved into the Quirinal Palace in Rome, the palace which had formerly been the residence of the popes, she had made up her mind that in conscience she could never visit Rome or any of the other territories which the Italian government had taken from the Holy See. She made it plain to her husband that if they were to spend their winters in Italy, it could not be

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in Rome or in any other city which had once been part of the Papal States. On this point she wrote to Sister Marie of the Cross: "My husband has gone to Italy to discuss with my father the matter of a winter residence for us. . . . You know that I have an inflexible conscience. He has not yet returned but I think he will arrange for either Milan or Venice."

On March 4, 1872, Clotilde wrote to Pope Pius IX informing him of the position she had taken relative to her visiting or living in any part of the former Papal States. She told the Holy Father that she had so far refused every invitation to visit Rome or any other former papal city in spite of the welcome she would receive from her family and the joy such visits would give her. But she asked permission to go to Rome in the event of the serious illness of any one of her loved ones. She also expressed her sympathy for the Pope in these words: "I deplore with all my soul and I shall always deplore the painful situations which for several years have afflicted Your Holiness, and if I could in any way mitigate so many offenses, how my heart would be happy. But the Holy Father in his immense goodness will understand that in spite of my good will I can do nothing in all this. Prayer is my only arms, my only consolation. I pray every day for Your Holiness, for your intentions, and I will do so especially during this month dedicated to the protector of the Church, the great Saint Joseph."

This was the first of a number of letters which Clotilde was to write to Pope Pius IX during the last six years of his pontificate. There was a filial informality in her letters, whether it was to ask for a blessing for one of her sons on the occasion of his First Holy Communion, to petition that Saint Francis de Sales be declared a doctor of the Church, or to detail the offering which she was going to make of

herself to God. And there was a fatherly solicitude in the Pope's letters to her.

In answering her request for permission to come to Rome in the event of the serious illness of any member of her family, Pope Pius IX said that he would give not a permission but a command for her to come on such occasions. As Clotilde read the Pope's letter, a great burden seemed lifted from her. Now she knew exactly what she could and would do. And no one would be able to change her position.

Prince Napoleon had hardly returned from Italy when he told Clotilde that he was going to re-enter political life. She would never understand his fluctuations. One minute he told her that he would never again meddle with politics and the next minute he was itching to try his political fortune again. As soon as he heard of the forthcoming elections in Ajaccio, Corsica, he decided to go there to announce his candidacy for the General Council. He won the election; but the authorities in Paris, on hearing the news, dispatched an extraordinary commissary to Corsica with orders forbidding the Prince not only all political activity but even permission to visit the former house of the Bonapartes. As a consequence the Prince reluctantly tendered his resignation and returned to Prangins. He was humiliated but not defeated. The old political fire had been re-kindled within him.

Prince Napoleon and Clotilde continued for some time to live peacefully at Prangins, occasionally going out and occasionally receiving visitors from France. One of the most frequent visitors was Ernest Renan. In her relations with Renan, Clotilde was always distant and reserved. He had recently published his other controversial volume, *Les Apôtres*, and Clotilde was convinced more than ever that

his influence was not to her husband's spiritual good. One day she was seen kneeling for a moment in prayer before she entered the dining room at La Bergerie to take her place beside Renan at table.

Renan, however, had the highest regard for Clotilde. Writing to Princess Julia Bonaparte after a visit to Prangins, he said: "I was at Prangins about a week ago where I found the Prince in a most philosophic frame of mind, and I admired the realism of his judgment which seeks no escape into sterile or illusory hopes. As for Princess Clotilde, it is always her high Christian stoicism which keeps her so great and strong in adversity. One might say that for her nothing has changed. She is a saint of the thirteenth century, belonging to the family of Saint Louis and Marguerite of Provence."

In July of 1872 there came to Nyon two Dominican Fathers who were to be of great help to Clotilde in her life as a Dominican tertiary. One was Père Alexandre-Vincent Jandel, master general of the Dominican Order; the other, Père Hyacinthe-Marie Cormier, then provincial of the Order in Toulouse. Père Jandel was suffering from jaundice and his doctors had advised him to go to Switzerland for a rest. Since there was no Dominican convent in Nyon, the two Dominicans accepted the hospitality of Abbé Gignoux; and it was through the Abbé that Clotilde met them. Because Père Jandel was quite ill, Clotilde had the opportunity of speaking to him on only two occasions but she was deeply impressed by him. Referring to one of these occasions, she was to write years later: "I accosted him with veneration, I who only a short time before had made my profession as tertiary and consequently was in a special way his daughter. . . . I shall always remember what he said to me when I happened to mention that certain practices

of the Secular Third Order seemed not to be the same in France and Italy. He answered most emphatically that there existed no such thing as French and Italian usages or practices of the Third Order but only *the Rule*."

A month later, on the Feast of Saint Hyacinth, the Master General enrolled Clotilde in the Confraternity of the Cord of Saint Thomas Aquinas, sometimes referred to as the Angelic Warfare. The saintly Père Jandel had already told her the story of the origin of the confraternity. When a young man, Thomas Aquinas had been imprisoned in the Aquino castle at Rocca Secca because his family was opposed to his entering the Order of Friars Preachers. In an attempt to break his resolution to become a Dominican, they sent into his room a young woman of loose moral character. As soon as Thomas realized the intent of the visitor he seized a brand from the burning fireplace and drove her out of his room. With the same firebrand he made a sign of the cross on one of the walls and then knelt down to thank God for his victory over the temptation. Caught in ecstasy, Thomas saw two angels descend from heaven who girded him with a mysterious cord, and from that moment Thomas never again experienced a carnal impulse. In memory of this vision the Order established the Confraternity of the Cord, whose members wear a blessed cord similar to the one which Thomas received from the hands of angels.

Since Père Jandel was too ill to receive frequent visits—he died five months later—Princess Clotilde asked Père Cormier to be her spiritual director, especially in matters pertaining to her life as a Dominican tertiary. It was under his direction that Clotilde began the practice of reading spiritual books by Dominicans, such as the *Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena* and the *Life of Saint Dominic* by Père Lacordaire. Although Père Cormier saw the Princess only a few times after the summer of 1872, the last time

probably being in 1908 when as Master General of the Order he had occasion to be in Piedmont, they corresponded up until Clotilde's death in 1911. While Clotilde was dying she remembered Père Cormier by directing that he be given a silver reliquary containing a relic of Catherine of Racconigi, one of the beatified members of the Dominican Order.

Père Jandel and Père Cormier were both impressed by the deep spirituality of the Princess. Writing from Nyon to one of his confreres, Père Cormier had this to say: "There are few people at Mass here during the week, but the Reverend Father General had this morning a noble attendant, the Princess Clotilde, a most fervent tertiary, whose piety is certainly worth that of an entire parish."

A third Dominican who was to have an even more decisive influence on Clotilde was Padre Raimondo Bianchi, procurator of the Order. Clotilde corresponded with Padre Bianchi up until his death in 1885 and it was under his direction that she made the act of oblation in 1875. As Padre Bianchi was living in Rome, Clotilde often made use of him as intermediary between herself and the Roman Curia or between herself and Pope Pius IX. She had great confidence in Padre Bianchi, having been entrusted to his spiritual care by Père Jandel himself shortly before the latter's death in 1872.

In October of 1872, Prince Napoleon wanted to attempt a return to France. Although Clotilde was personally opposed to the idea, she agreed to go with him. Before reaching Paris, however, they stopped at the nearby Château of Millemont as the guests of Maurice Richard, a former Minister of Fine Arts and a very close friend of Prince Napoleon. Although the Prince and Clotilde had traveled incognito, the authorities of Paris soon learned of their

presence at Millemont. For two days police kept watch around the château in order to arrest the Prince if he ventured outdoors. On the third day the police commissioner with a brigadier and two guards sought admittance to the château.

When the doorkeeper led the men into a salon, the commissioner said in a loud voice, "I wish to speak with Prince Napoleon." The Prince, who was in an adjoining salon with his friends, came out to see who it was when he heard his name being used.

"I am Prince Napoleon," he said.

"I am here to give you this order of expulsion signed by the Minister of the Interior," the commissioner said as he handed Prince Napoleon a sealed document.

"But this order is illegal," the Prince insisted, "and I refuse to submit to it."

"You will constrain me to use force, Your Highness."

"Do as you like but I protest vigorously against this order and refuse to obey it."

Turning to the guards, the commissioner said, "Guards, arrest the Prince."

It was only then that Prince Napoleon yielded.

Meanwhile Clotilde had entered the room to determine the cause of the arguing. When the commissioner explained that she and her husband were *personae non gratae* to the French Republic, she said she had a message she wanted him to take back to Adolphe Thiers, the President of France. "I charge you to say to those who sent you that on September 5, 1870, I traversed the most populous sections of Paris without anyone giving me the least mark of disrespect and that now Monsieur Thiers shows himself less gentlemanly than the Parisian workmen, since he has me put out of France by his police."

During the few days that she and her husband had been

at the Château of Millemont, Clotilde had gone up several times into its highest tower to look out over the city of Paris. In the distance she could see the cupola of the Invalides, where her father-in-law was buried, and the nearby Monastery des Oiseaux, in which lived Sister Marie of the Cross. How Clotilde longed to visit both places again, but the sudden arrest and expulsion had made impossible the fulfillment of her desire.

ESTRANGEMENT AND SEPARATION

At the beginning of December, 1872, Prince Napoleon and Clotilde went to England, to Chislehurst, where Napoleon III, Eugénie, and the Prince Imperial, now sixteen years old, were living. The Emperor was seriously ill and Clotilde had prevailed upon her husband to visit him. Her only regret was that they would be away from Prangins and the children at Christmas. Since Louis was also a student at Vevey at this time, she arranged for her two sons to remain at school and for Letizia to be taken care of at Prangins. She had forgotten nothing—the trees, the yuletide decorations, the gifts—so that her children would have the things which make a child's Christmas happy.

Prince Napoleon and Clotilde had not seen Napoleon III since the Emperor had left for the battlefield in 1870, and they were shocked when they saw him at Camden Place House. Some of the doctors had advised an operation for the removal of the stone in the kidney but it was only when Prince Napoleon said to the Emperor, "It is only in this way that you will obtain complete command of yourself," that the Emperor consented.

The Prince Imperial, now a student at the Woolwich Military Academy, was confident that his father would regain his health if he submitted to an operation. In his customary New Year's greeting to Pope Pius IX, his godfather, the young Prince confided his optimism and asked for a blessing for his father. For some reason or other the letter was delayed and reached Rome on the very day that the telegram arrived informing the Holy Father of the Emperor's death.

The first operation on the Emperor had been performed on January 2; but the result was slight, for the stone was hardly touched. A second operation was performed on January 6. It was more painful than the first one, and the Emperor came out of it in great pain and distress. While the Empress was near his bed, he murmured, "Where is Louis?" She answered, "He has gone back to Woolwich; do you want him?" "No, no, he is working and I do not want him disturbed," insisted the Emperor.

The following day, Doctor Conneau, who had just returned from London where he had been to see his daughter who was ill, entered the room. "Ah, is that you, Conneau?" the Emperor asked. "You were at Sedan, were you not?" Thinking that the Emperor had made a mistake, the doctor answered, "Yes, Sire, I have been to London." "I did not ask whether you were in London; I asked if you were at Sedan," the Emperor said with greater emphasis. When the doctor answered, "Yes, Sire, I was there," the Emperor closed his eyes and murmured, "Ah!"

After these words, the Emperor hardly spoke again, except to respond in monosyllables to questions put by the doctors or the Empress.

On the evening of January 8, the Emperor seemed improved and the doctors were preparing to perform a third operation. But the improvement was not genuine, for he

soon had another attack. Father Goddard, the Chislehurst priest who often came to Camden Place and with whom the Emperor liked to chat, was summoned.

As the Empress drew near the bedside of the dying Emperor, one of the doctors said, "Sire, the Empress has come to see how Your Majesty is." The Emperor understood, for he turned and sought her out with his eyes. After she had kissed his forehead, he turned his head a little and put his lips to kiss her but he had hardly the strength to do so. Doctor Thompson gave the dying man a few drops of cordial but Eugénie's remark that "Louis is coming, dear," had a greater reviving effect. A smile spread over his ashen face.

Father Goddard had scarcely finished administering extreme unction when the Emperor breathed his last. It was a little before midday on January 9, 1873, shortly before the Prince Imperial arrived from Woolwich.

In those days of sorrow Clotilde was a great consolation to the Empress. The night preceding the funeral the Empress and Clotilde prayed together as they sat or knelt beside the coffin of the dead Emperor. For Clotilde it was one more meditation on the vanity of all purely human wishes and on the final earthly destiny of man, even of an emperor. Of what avail were now the brilliant successes of the first decade of the Second Empire? Where were now the long file of beautiful women who had once enjoyed the intimacies of the Emperor?

After the death of the Emperor, Prince Napoleon thought he could assume charge of all the dynastic affairs since he was guardian of the Prince Imperial, who was not yet of legal age. He went into the Emperor's cabinet to see if he could find the last will and testament and other papers belonging to the late Emperor, but he was chagrined to find a will which bore a date antecedent to the Battle of Sedan and all other papers sealed with the signature of the Em-

press. He was so annoyed that he told his wife they would leave immediately after the funeral services, and he left without even paying his last respects to the Empress.

They went to London where they remained for some time, much longer than they had planned. Although Clotilde was anxious to see her children again, she preferred remaining in London since she had heard rumors that her husband was again thinking of going to Rome. If it had to be a choice between London and Rome, she would take London.

She wrote to Sister Marie of the Cross: "You have perhaps heard the rumor that we are going to Rome. I can tell you that there is no truth to this. I don't want to go to Rome for even one day. I have said so to my husband when we discussed a trip to Italy for later on. I consider this a matter of conscience, about which I am sure that I will never change my mind."

To another canoness at the Monastery des Oiseaux she wrote: "There are times when one is obliged to express one's convictions. In spite of all that may naturally attract me to Rome, I shall always remember that before all and above all I am a daughter of the Church and of the Holy Father. I am and want to remain a good Catholic."

Finally, her husband told her that they would go to Milan, to pass the winter at the royal villa which King Victor Emmanuel had placed at their disposal. At first they intended to stay only three months but Prince Napoleon insisted on staying until the end of June, and Clotilde dared not to cross him. She was anxious to return to Prangins but the only thing that seemed to be on her husband's mind was the idea of an imperial restoration in France. And in this ambition he was secretly being supported by King Victor Emmanuel.

They had hardly returned to Prangins when Prince Na-

poleon told his wife that he was going to Paris again. Political restrictions against him had been mitigated somewhat, and he had decided to try once more to establish himself in Paris. The day on which he left for France he told his wife that he would let her know when she and the children were to join him.

In the hope of fulfilling his dream of an imperial restoration in accordance with the principles of his uncle, the great Napoleon I, Prince Napoleon established permanent headquarters in Paris, at 86 Rue Malesherbes, opposite the entrance to Monceau Park. It was there that he held meeting after meeting with members of the Bonapartist Party, taking for granted that he was entitled to its leadership, a right disputed by the Empress and the Prince Imperial in England and by Clotilde in Switzerland. The more Clotilde heard of her husband's political maneuvers the more convinced she was that she wanted no part of them. She knew his secret ambition—to become president of the French Republic—and she shuddered to think of the government's policies toward the Church if he gained control. The sudden death of Sister Marie of the Cross in November, 1873, had deprived her of one to whom she had had frequent recourse in her judgments relative to her husband's activities. But she was sure that Sister Marie of the Cross would have concurred in her present judgment.

Meanwhile Prince Napoleon had written a number of times to his wife telling her to come to Paris to live. She knew why. He did not want her but the prestige of her name. Her name could be of use to him in order to gain the suffrages of the aristocracy and of the Catholics in France. Her good relations with the Empress and the Pope, to say nothing of her influence with her father, were other reasons why he wanted her with him. She resisted this political involvement not only because it was against her

conscience but also because it violated the traditional position of the women of the House of Savoy. In her dilemma she wrote to Padre Bianchi in Rome, asking that he place her problem before Pope Pius IX. In her letter she expressed the fear that merely being with her husband at Rue Malesherbes would constitute a tacit approval of all that he was doing. On the other hand, she feared that opposition to her husband might result in his taking the two boys away from her altogether. At least now they came home from Vevey every two weeks.

In the beginning of February, 1874, Clotilde went to Paris in the hope of reaching some amicable agreement with her husband. Moreover, she hoped that she could induce him to go to England for the birthday of the Prince Imperial in March, at which time the son of the Emperor would reach majority. Clotilde stayed for eighteen days at the apartment at 86 Rue Malesherbes, but in vain she tried to make her husband understand why she did not want to live in Paris—Prangins would be better for her personally and she would be closer to the children. In vain she pleaded for him to go to England for the Prince Imperial's birthday, adding that it would also be an opportunity to become reconciled with the Empress. Her husband merely told her that if she wouldn't do what he wanted, then it would be better if they separated.

Clotilde took advantage of her stay in Paris to visit some of the churches and shrines. She visited the Dominican church in Rue Jean de Beauvais, where she had the happiness of going to confession to one of the Dominican Fathers whom she knew; made a visit to the tombs of the Jesuits who had been martyred during the uprisings of 1871; went to the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires and to the chapel of the Sisters of Charity on Rue du Bac, the chapel in which our Lady of the Miraculous Medal had

appeared to Catherine Labouré. At Rue du Bac she was given special permission to talk with one of the postulants whom she knew, even though it was Lent and postulants were normally not permitted to see visitors.

Realizing that her husband would not change his mind, Clotilde decided that there was nothing left to do but return to Prangins. Neither her failure to convince him nor his threat, however, could disturb a soul that was becoming increasingly strong and simple.

A few days after her return from Paris, she wrote to Père Cormier:

I have been back only a few days, happy to return to peace and calm; and it will probably be a long time before I leave here again. How many things have happened to me in the last few months, Father! Every day my life becomes more the way of the cross. But far from complaining I can only be glad, for it unites me the more to Jesus. And it is He who leads me in everything, everywhere, and always; this is so perceptible that my life would be inexplicable without His special protection. So many graces, Father, urge me to humble myself always more and make me understand better my own nothingness. I want only to love and serve Jesus; nothing else is important to me. I want to be absolutely all His without reserve. If I suffer it is for Him—in the fulfillment of my duty, to remain constant in upholding His precepts. Hence, how can I complain? I am so tranquil and peaceful in the midst of everything that it seems there is hardly any merit in what I suffer.

. . . I don't know how to tell you but it seems that *everything within me is simplified*. I don't know how to explain it even to myself, but the least thing unites me to Jesus, and I feel that He is ALL for me and in me.

Added to this is a real need of suffering, which nothing can diminish or arrest; on the contrary, everything augments my need of suffering. From all this you will have some idea of what passes within me.

It was at this time that Clotilde resolved to do something which had been on her mind for some time, for she felt she might never again have the opportunity. She confided to Bishop Mermillod of Geneva her worries about the private baptisms of her three children. Would it be possible to supply the full ceremony for the sacrament if the children were rebaptized? The sympathetic Bishop arranged to have the three children rebaptized conditionally but according to the full ritual of the Church, Victor and Louis in the Catholic church in Vevey and Maria Letizia in Nyon. The day after his renewed baptism, Victor made his First Holy Communion and then received the sacrament of confirmation from Bishop Marilley of Lausanne.

Her children baptized according to the mind of the Church, and her first child made strong with the Eucharist and with the gifts of the Holy Ghost through the sacrament of confirmation; the Holy Father's letter of three days before in which His Holiness had written, "It is a great pleasure for me to be able to give the apostolic benediction to the son of Your Highness for the solemn day of his First Holy Communion. I pray the good God to take entire possession of his soul so that no one will ever be able to snatch it from His Hands." All this she deemed recompense enough for what she was suffering on account of her husband. . . .

The spring and summer of 1874 passed quietly and peacefully for Clotilde even though the uncertainty of her marital status caused her some concern. On May 30 she wrote again to Père Cormier:

In spite of everything I understand the great grace which the Lord is giving me in leaving me in this uncertainty, in this darkness concerning my future. In this way I can prove my love all the more by going forward regardless and by submitting myself to everything which comes unexpectedly, to everything which He permits. I have so much to expiate, Father, both for myself and for others that in reality nothing would be too hard for me, but I marvel that the divine Master treats me so sweetly. I feel so great a need for suffering that nothing can arrest it. If only I knew at least how to live my life as I should! Please ask this grace of Jesus for me, Father, especially during the month of His divine Heart. It is from Him that I have received everything and I have so much trust in the Heart of Jesus. He has saved me, sustained me, directed me, and I have every hope that He will continue to do so. May He do with me whatever He wishes provided that I belong totally to Him.

The idea of expiatory suffering, which she mentioned in her letter to Père Cormier, was repeated in her letter to Padre Bianchi two days later. "In a final analysis," she wrote, "I am of no use in this world if, through suffering, I do not expiate for my own sins and for those of others."

In October of that year, 1874, Clotilde received word that her husband was again a candidate for the General Council in Corsica but that he was being opposed by Prince Charles Bonaparte, the candidate endorsed by the Empress and the Prince Imperial. The Prince Imperial, who was now of age, had assumed the leadership of the Bonapartists, an assumption which Prince Napoleon was still ignoring. When Clotilde later heard of her husband's defeat, she knew that he would blame her and say that if she had used her influence with the Empress he would have been elected.

Meanwhile Clotilde had heard from Padre Bianchi giving his judgment and that of the Holy Father on the difficult position in which she found herself. In her letter to Padre Bianchi she had sought answers to two questions. Could she in conscience go to live with her husband in Paris or would her going be a tacit approval of his policies? Should she go for the sake of her children, in the hope that her husband would grant her a more immediate part in their Catholic upbringing? The answers which she received were clear and definite: her going to Paris would not necessarily mean a tacit approval of her husband's conduct; if she decided to go for the sake of the children, she should first receive a formal promise, made in the presence of her father, of her husband's willingness to let her assume charge of their Catholic education.

Padre Bianchi's letter gave her great peace. Although she was aware of her husband's notorious infidelity to her, this would not enter into her decision. His infidelity she would leave to the mercy of God. For the sake of their two sons, she would willingly sacrifice her repugnance at the idea of going to Paris, provided that her husband would give her the assurance which Padre Bianchi said she should have.

But before she could either write or go to her husband, she received word from him that he would arrive in Prangins on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.

On his arrival at La Bergerie, Prince Napoleon said unceremoniously to his wife, "I want to know your intentions so that I shall know how much I can count on you."

Clotilde answered calmly, "You can count on me for everything, Napoleon, except in those things which go contrary to the principles which you know I hold."

"Then I see it's futile to talk any further, for it is your principles which divide us."

"Napoleon, I only ask that you do not involve me in what you are doing. For me the head of the House of Bonaparte is the Prince Imperial and I cannot take part in activities which would place you at the head of a revolution."

He then told her that if she went to Paris with him he would not ask her participation in anything to which she was opposed. Although Clotilde knew her husband too well to nourish any such illusion, she told him that she would go to Paris to live only on condition that he gave her a formal promise permitting her to direct the Catholic education of Victor and Louis. Her husband was not ready for this.

Realizing that his wife would not yield, Prince Napoleon could hold himself no longer. He stormed at her. "You know what you are? A fanatic, a bigot! Once you have said your *non possumus* you consider yourself infallible like your Pope. There is no reasoning with you. All right, here is my ultimatum. Either you come to Paris or we shall be separated. You may keep Maria Letizia with you and stay at Prangins but I will take the two boys with me to Paris. Give me your answer by tomorrow morning—before I return to Paris."

Then Prince Napoleon retired to his room in La Bergerie and Clotilde to hers. During the entire night she either knelt praying with her head in her hands or stood looking out the window at the star-filled sky. In the distance she could see the outline of Mont Blanc. Someone had said that the outline of the mountain bore a resemblance to the profile of the great Napoleon I, and many said that her husband looked like his uncle. Yes, her husband's intransigency was like that gigantic, immovable mountain profiling itself against the approaching dawn.

The next morning she told her husband that she had made her decision: she would not go to Paris with him.

After he left La Bergerie she sat down to write to her father and to Padre Bianchi. To the latter she wrote:

I thought everything over and I was convinced, after our long conversation of January 6 in which he told me that he wanted my answer by the next morning, that I could give only a negative answer to my going to Paris and doing what he wanted. He did not wish to concede on any point and in conscience I could not. Since there is no way of our coming to a mutual understanding, we have arrived at the dolorous necessity of a separation.

In early March of the same year, 1875, Prince Napoleon wrote to Clotilde telling her that at the end of the month their two sons would be withdrawn from the school in Vevey and come to Paris. He had arranged to have them enrolled in a school at Vannes, not far from Paris.

In accordance with their father's wishes, Victor and Louis left Vevey and returned to Prangins, where they were to stay until he came for them. For about two weeks, Clotilde had the happiness of having her sons with her. Every morning she thought to herself, "Will he come for them today?" and every evening she repeated the question to herself with only one variation, "Will he come for them tomorrow?"

On April 11, Prince Napoleon arrived in Prangins. Clotilde was ready. On April 6 she had written to Padre Bianchi:

I want only to do my duty and I'll do it at any cost. I am convinced of being on the right road, the only one which I must follow. If I yielded for the sake of my sons, all my past would be lost and I would be compromising not only my future but also that of my children. . . . It is hard for me to have to take this stand since I desire nothing but to live hidden and unknown.

But what can I do? I must fulfill my duty and go forward.

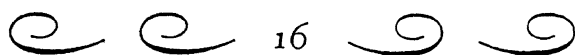
Truly the good Jesus has broken all my bonds, and it is for me to be the grateful victim. I am doing all I can towards practicing those vows [the three vows of religion] which constitute my happiness, and the Lord is helping me very much. I am His and I want always to be His more and more. As He wills in everything. Beyond this I do not concern myself.

When it was nearing departure time, Clotilde accompanied her sons and her husband to the railroad station at Nyon. The train was late, so the four sat on a bench in the waiting room. The two boys kept looking up into the pale face of their mother who kept caressing and kissing them, but they were too young to grasp the full import of their departure for Paris. Prince Napoleon sat with his back to his wife. Several times Clotilde touched one of his shoulders as if to call his attention to something, but he kept his back rigidly turned.

As soon as they heard the train approaching, they all rose from the bench to go outside. Clotilde, doing her best to keep back her tears, faced her husband as she said, "Please, Napoleon, I beg you, take good care of the boys." He kept an impassive face as he turned away from her and hurried the boys to the train. Clotilde remained standing where she was and called out to her husband once more, "Please, Napoleon, take good care of them." She remained there until the train started, then turned and walked to the carriage which was to take her back to La Bergerie. She was saddened but not disheartened.

Two days later she wrote to a canoness at the Monastery des Oiseaux: "As for me personally I have only gained great benefits from a situation in which from the very beginning my self-love had to be completely put aside: bene-

fits of faith, being obliged to believe, without doubting, that Jesus is able to save my children; benefits of hope, expecting everything from Him for them; and finally, benefits of charity, putting God's love above everything else."



AN ACT OF OBLATION

The passing of time brought Clotilde no regret for the decision she had made. She looked only to the future—and to the inner graces which were urging her to offer herself as a victim to God. On June 9, almost two months after her sons had left her, she wrote to Père Cormier:

It is a long time since I last wrote, Father, and so many things have happened meanwhile—so many crosses, so many sufferings, disturbances, preoccupations. . . . To explain everything well, Father, is impossible: the case is so complicated! I could do so only if I talked with you. This much I shall tell you—a total difference of principles and convictions between us, especially of late, has been the cause of our separation. Otherwise I would have had to take part in and approve things which would have been absolutely impossible for me from any point of view. My conscience, my principles, my convictions, my honor, my honesty could not approve. And I might add, Father, that I did not trust my own judgment in these things but took counsel before I acted and all agreed as to what I should do. Even my father, to whom I had recourse, approved my decision. . . .

As for my duty I will always do it, firmly and humbly convinced as I am of finding myself on the right road. Nevertheless you can well imagine, Father, how painful has been the combat.

What I can tell you is that I have never lost my peace. . . . Suffering does not frighten me. I am happy to suffer all that Jesus wills and as much as He wills.

I know what suffering has been to me in my life: it has been my safeguard, my salvation. I am not anxious about the future. Jesus is there and no one will be able to take Him from me. I have always found Him and to Him I entrust all, being more and more convinced of my nothingness and incapacity.

Pray for me, Father. Ask the Heart of Jesus that I be more energetic against myself in order to give Him always more, for what I am now doing is so little!

On September 25 of the same year she wrote to Padre Bianchi:

I have suffered much in life and I have suffered in every way, but I bless the Lord, considering suffering as a great favor. There have been few illusions in my life.

Jesus has tried me in so many ways. After such a past of suffering, the future cannot frighten me. But I do not wish to trust in myself—only in Him who is Strength, Goodness, and Mercy itself.

I am calm and tranquil, without will except His, poor in everything and always the more abandoned by all. My life is difficult I know, for I am determined to do my duty at any cost, putting duty before myself. But it is precisely in the moment in which I am the most abandoned that Jesus draws nearer to me and makes the calculations of others turn to my advantage. . . . He knows that He has a poor, a most poor, daughter for whom He is everything, who wishes only

Him, and who, in order to find Him more, would do anything, not for her own interest but through love of Him.

To love Him, to console Him, to be a victim of expiation. Here is the desire of my heart—to destroy the self in order to put Him in my place.

Oh, if you only knew how powerful is the love of Jesus to me! Love is the means that will enable me to do all, the stimulus most sure.

For years, to love Jesus has been my most intimate desire, my prayer, my petition. It seems to me that this is the road that Jesus Himself wants me to follow, and this is what I often hear repeated in my heart after Holy Communion. I have been shown that for me love is the means of arriving at everything, the key to all things.

To love Jesus for the sake of Jesus and not for myself or anyone else, but sometimes it is to such a degree that there is danger that I might go too far in this way; for at the only word of love for Jesus, every other consideration—such as the happiness of heaven or the pains of hell—would be cast aside if I let myself go.

One of the things which the Lord makes me understand is that He wishes my soul pure, that I should purify myself always more, removing from my heart the smallest stain. On this point He demands much but how many things He makes me understand little by little!

One of the things which Clotilde was understanding “little by little” was that God was asking for a complete and irrevocable offering of herself to Him and a total renunciation of all that was worldly. As she wrote to Père Cormier on July 23, 1875, in words reminiscent of the mystics, “*I have a great need of annihilation and immolation! No hardship or suffering seems enough for me. I should like to be able to consume myself at the feet of*

Jesus, as a victim of expiation, of reparation, and of love."

The idea of offering herself as a victim had become an all-consuming desire, but when she first asked permission to make such an act, she was refused. It was not until two or three years later that Padre Bianchi finally gave the permission. To Padre Bianchi's permission was added the assurance that Pope Pius IX had also approved her making the act of oblation. Now she was convinced more than ever that this was what God wanted of her.

On the other hand, her soul was so detached from her own will that had she been refused the permission, she would have been equally peaceful and happy. After receiving the permission, she wrote to Canon Gazelli: "I wanted to offer myself but I do not think that this desire was self-will on my part. For if I had been refused the permission, I would not have thought any more about it."

On November 23, 1875, ten days before the date set for the act of oblation, Clotilde wrote to Pope Pius IX:

My only intention in wanting to make this total offering of myself was in order to correspond, in so far as I could, to the love which the Lord has demonstrated toward me during my whole life; it was the great need which I had to express my gratitude, expiation, and love toward Jesus. Obedience, however, has imposed upon me that I make my offering also for the following intentions, which I place at the feet of Your Holiness so that they may be approved and blessed: (1) for the Church; (2) for the Sovereign Pontiff; (3) for my loved ones; (4) for the Order of Saint Dominic.

Clotilde made her act of oblation in the church at Nyon on December 3, 1875, which was the First Friday of the month. She said the act first silently, at the elevation of the Mass, then aloud after she had finished her thanksgiving for Holy Communion.

Five days later, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Clotilde renewed the act, kneeling before our Lady's altar in the church at Nyon, where four years before she had been received as a Dominican tertiary. The renewal of the act, she said, was to place it in our Lady's hands so that the Virgin might offer it to her Son. The idea of going to Jesus through Mary was an integral part of Clotilde's spirituality and this at a time when the treatise *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* by Saint Louis de Montfort was little known.

The original copy of Clotilde's act of oblation, which is now in the archives of Santa Sabina in Rome, reads:

O Jesus, my God and Saviour, I come to You with feelings of most profound humility in order to give myself completely to You as victim. Deign, therefore, to accept me and to dispose of my entire being as it pleases You.

I desire to be Your victim solely through love of You, in order to acknowledge Your sovereign dominion over me, in thanksgiving for Your boundless and continuous blessings, in order to console You and to atone for the outrages which You receive, especially in the Eucharist.

I desired You alone, O my divine Master, but obedience demands that I add conditions to this offering. To the desire, then, of offering myself as victim to You and for You, I add the desire of being a victim for these intentions:

1. For Your Holy Roman Catholic Church, our Mother, for all that she suffers, especially in Italy, Switzerland, and Germany at this moment.

2. For the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX, Your infallible vicar, that his days may be prolonged so that, if it be Your Will, he may see the triumph of the Church, Your Spouse.

3. For all the souls which are Yours and which are dear to me, especially for my father, my husband, my brother Humbert; for the eternal salvation of Victor, Louis, and Maria Letizia, whom I entrust to You in a very special way.

4. For Your Order of Saint Dominic, whose unworthy child I am.

Deign to accept these intentions, O Jesus. I unite them to the offering which I make of myself to You. Please bless them, as well as the poorest and the smallest of your children,

SISTER MARY CATHERINE OF THE SACRED HEART
of the Third Order of Penance of
Saint Dominic

Peace—serenity—detachment—joy. This was Clotilde's state of mind and heart after she made her act of oblation.

On December 21 she wrote to Padre Bianchi:

Everything is therefore finished and truly finished. I no longer belong to myself, I am all Jesus'; to Him I gave myself entirely and for always.

If you only knew how happy I am! I have been able to respond to the call of the Lord, convinced that such was His Will for me.

The days of retreat which preceded the offering were days of grace in which I saw so clearly the work of Jesus in me during my whole life, for the act of oblation was only the consequence of the graces which I have received from my birth. All seemed but a preparation for what took place; the graces of all kinds which have been given me were only to conduct me to the place where I now am. How I see it, how I understand it now.

My past has been a tissue of graces, of lights, of special blessings. The Lord has saved me. His work is so evident that it almost seems as if He took me by the hand.

The future does not torment me at all, for I am convinced that the help of my Lord will not be lacking. I assure you that I am so tranquil that to be more so seems to me impossible.

I feel a great consolation in being able to say that in so far as it depended on me, I gave myself in a most absolute way to the Lord, holding back nothing, rendering Him love for love, giving Him absolutely everything.

Clotilde's life at Prangins during the next three years was a mixture of joy and sorrow, of consolation and aridity; but one thing there always was and that was serenity.

Her biggest privation was her children being far away. What were they doing? Were they being permitted to practice their religion? She received little personal news from Paris. She had heard that her husband now considered himself a widower; that her two sons went every Sunday to their aunt Matilde's for dinner; that Louis might make his First Holy Communion.

The political news was fuller and more precise. On February 20, 1876, her husband again presented himself as a candidate in Ajaccio; but this time he was opposed by the powerful Eugène Rouher, a former minister of the Second Empire. Rouher was supported by the Prince Imperial, who declared in a public letter: "Prince Napoleon presents himself to the voters of Ajaccio against my will. Since he seeks support from our enemies, I am forced to consider him also as an enemy." Rouher won the election, as the Corsicans expected; and Prince Napoleon returned to Paris disillusioned and embittered.

In Paris the republicans, especially the leftists within that party, were growing in power. Clotilde knew that this meant open war against the Church, and she was grateful that she was not now in France. On February 25 she wrote to a dear friend:

. . . what is happening in France confirms the way of abstention which I must continue to follow. I really don't know in which direction we are going, and after the elections of the twentieth we shall see only more difficulties. The results of the Paris elections, above all, were most disheartening. . . . It is necessary to pray to disarm the wrath of God since a great part of the votes of the twentieth are a real offense against Him by reason of what they represent. We live in sad times and perhaps things must first become worse before they turn for the better. But what will happen to souls in the midst of all this, and how many will be lost?

The news from Italy was no less discouraging, for in Italy too a radical combination of liberals, socialists, and Freemasons were gaining more and more control since good Catholics were abstaining from politics. There were public insults to the Pope and the Church, marriage and education had been secularized, and many religious houses were prostrate under the heel of the government's discriminatory measures. Moreover, Clotilde knew that the anticlerical and antipapal movements were as strong in Switzerland and Germany.

The more Clotilde heard of the sufferings of the Church, the more she longed to expiate the sins of unbelieving and unfaithful men; and she offered herself as an anvil to receive the blows which were being heaped upon the Church. She did not have to wait long to be taken at her word. One cross after another came to try her heroic spirit.

Although it had been understood that her two sons would come to Prangins for their vacations, Clotilde received a letter on Good Friday, 1876, informing her that they were to remain in Paris for the Easter holidays. Before she received the letter, her heart had been anticipating the Easter joy of having with her the children whom she

had not seen for some months. But though her maternal heart sorrowed, her soul rejoiced in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings on Good Friday.

On Easter Tuesday she wrote to Padre Bianchi:

I thought that I already knew something of the weight of the cross and of sacrifice, but it is only lately that I have really known what the cross means. I have known it in a very intimate way, even though I am not able to explain it. I think it is the first time that I have carried my cross well and all for Jesus. I think it is also the first time that the cross surrounds me on every side. On other occasions I perhaps suffered more on certain points; but now there is nothing but crosses for me on every side. How grateful I am to Jesus for this Lent! What a beautiful and precious Lent He has made me observe! How sweet is this phrase—*Amor meus crucifixus est!*

Another cross came soon after. In early June, when she heard that Louis was to make his First Holy Communion on the Feast of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, she wrote to her husband for permission to attend the ceremony. The answer was a prompt and peremptory no. On June 19, she wrote to Père Cormier saying how happy she was that her son was soon to make his First Holy Communion, then adding: "However, even in the midst of this consolation, there is not lacking a sacrifice for me, that of not being able to assist at an act so important in the life of every Christian. How I would love to be present! But you know well, dear Father, that I cannot do what I wish. But may the Lord accept the sacrifice which I make with all my heart for the good of my Louis."

At the end of that year, 1876, Clotilde received word that her brother Amedeo had lost his wife. Her brother had married the young and lovely Maria Vittoria dal Pozzo

della Cisterna, a member of an old and noble Piedmontese family, in 1865; and during the eleven years of their married life they had had three children. The death of Maria Vittoria was a shock to Clotilde but she immediately went to Turin to give what comfort she could to her sorrowing brother.

On her return to Prangins two weeks later, she wrote to Padre Bianchi relative to her sister-in-law's death:

I lose in my sister-in-law the only one in the family with whom I was completely in accord: I was completely one with her as she was with me. We understood each other very well. From this point of view I can only thank the Lord for the new detachment which He asks of me, so long as everything leads me much more to Him alone.

I cannot say that I do not feel this separation, but I assure you that I resign myself most willingly. I not only resign myself but I am most happy to do in everything the blessed will of Jesus.

The year 1877 was filled with difficulties for the Church in France and Italy. In her longing to be of help to the Church and to souls, Clotilde wanted to add action to her prayers. In so far as the situation in France was concerned, she was helpless, for her husband was one of the most vocal critics of the Church. But she thought she might be able to exert some influence in the Italian situation by writing to her father. When the Italian Parliament, under the influence of a strong Masonic faction, approved in January 1877 a number of legal reprisals against the Catholic clergy—the so-called “laws against the abuses of the clergy”—Clotilde wrote to King Victor Emmanuel:

Dearest Papà,

How many times you have permitted your Clotilde to tell you whatever she was thinking! In your good-

ness you have always let me talk and explain as much as I wanted. Today I come to you again. Counting always on your affection for me, I dare to write to you what is in my heart. Listen to me; but also believe that if I write to you in this way it is truly because I have a great love for you.

I assure you that I am profoundly afflicted by the law passed recently on the so-called "abuses of the clergy."

Dear Papà, in what direction are we going? Think about it, consider the gravity of such a law, and permit me to tell you what Mamà and Grandmamà would have said, but with much more weight, I know. Out of charity do something, do your best so that the law will not be put into force.

We go from bad to worse, dear Papà. They drag you along; for by yourself I know you would not give your hands to such things.

Take courage and consider at what point we have arrived and where they want to lead you. Have no illusions—the bad will never be contented. They will always work against you.

Permit me to say this: I know very well that my Papà is not attached to his position; but there is one thing to which you must hold on and that is your soul, your eternal salvation. If no one else will tell you this, I will; I will take courage and remind you of the truth.

Out of charity, do not compromise, permitting so many harmful things to be done to the Church, to her good, to her freedom.

Perhaps you will think that I dare say too much. You will excuse me but it is impossible for me not to say to you what I see, what I feel, what I know to be the truth.

The last day will come for each one of us; and then things will be seen clearly. Do not prepare for yourself, dear Papà, terrible and painful remorse.

Why always afflict the Church, our Mother? Why afflict the heart of the Holy Father? If you only knew, dear Papà, how much I suffer because of these things!

You know as well as I do that everything will pass away in this world, that everything will fall, and that only the Church will remain unshaken, having the promise of her divine Founder.

Dear Papà, please do what you can, I repeat, regarding this new law, and watch where they drag you.

I finish, having said much, I know; but it is because I love you so very much. You believe this and you believe me, don't you?

I kiss your hand, dearest Papà, repeating that I am always your most respectful and most obedient daughter,

MARIA CLOTILDE

In answer to her letter, King Victor Emmanuel sent Clotilde a telegram written in cipher, telling her that the law she referred to would not have the consequences she feared and that the law itself might be rejected when it was voted upon in the Senate. The law was passed but its enforcement was another thing. In fact, little by little it became inoperative.

This was not the first time Clotilde had written to her father in behalf of the Church or of religion. She had on a number of occasions tried to use her influence in attempts to regain for religious the convents or monasteries which had been confiscated by the government.

Clotilde's mission, however, lay principally in prayer and suffering. She had made her own the words of Saint Paul to the Colossians, ". . . what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ I fill up in my flesh for His body, which is the Church."

But up until 1877, whatever Clotilde had suffered by way of external disappointments and difficulties had been

accompanied by spiritual consolations. She seemed inundated in a sensible awareness of God's presence. God's love for her was an inner glow and warmth which nothing outside could diminish or even disturb. She had not yet experienced the sensible withdrawals and the aridity which Christ usually reserves for those who are sincere in their desire to be like Him. This night of the soul, classically described by Saint John of the Cross, did not come to Clotilde until 1877. On August 21 of that year she wrote to Padre Bianchi:

For the last few months I have been suffering interior difficulties and repugnances. . . . I have even gotten to the point where it annoys me to go to Mass and I weary just walking to the church. It would take very little to make me omit going to Mass and receiving Holy Communion when I am able to do so. The mere act of assisting at Mass has become so painful that sometimes I do nothing but weep during the whole Mass and I go to Holy Communion only through obedience. However, I have never missed in spite of all these difficulties.

Since Easter I have not had the ease and fervor with which for many years I made my thanksgiving after Holy Communion. Then everything was so easy. I had only to let the Lord work in me while I remained tranquil in my joy in His presence, saying almost nothing since Jesus was doing all in me. Now it is no longer thus. I no longer feel anything and my thanksgivings go along as best they can. . . .

I am all Jesus' and I want nothing but Him. I want to do everything for Him in spite of the difficulties which I encounter. To live hidden, unknown, poor, humiliated, disregarded—this is all I desire, this is what attracts me with the same power which attracts so many others to honors and the goods of this world.

For me Jesus is enough, even though I do not understand nor feel His presence. May He do with me whatever He wills; I no longer exist, I no longer am anything.

I cannot say that I do not feel this state of inner aridity but I think that were it possible for me to feel it more in order to suffer more, I would be willing in spite of my human nature and all its outcries.

The soul that truly loves and trusts remains faithful in spite of the desert through which it must pass to reach the promised land. The senses may cry out, "Lord, send my roots rain," but the faithful soul continues on its way through the desert of an arid faith.

Clotilde emerged from her dark night of the soul with her faith strengthened and her love purified. She was now going daily to Nyon for Mass and Holy Communion, and more than ever she sought to give herself to the service of others. She knew what Christ had said to Saint Catherine of Siena:

I require that you should love Me with the same love with which I love you. This indeed you cannot do because I loved you without first being loved. All the love which you have for Me you owe to Me, so that it is not of grace that you love Me, but because you ought to do so. . . . Therefore to Me, in person, you cannot repay the love which I require of you; but I have placed you in the midst of your fellows that you may do to them that which you cannot do to Me, this is to say, that you may love your neighbor of free grace, without expecting any return from him, and what you do to him, I count as done to Me.

During her last three years in Prangins, Clotilde devoted herself almost exclusively to helping the poor and the sick, regardless of whether they were Catholic or not. Of her

yearly pension of one hundred thousand *lire* (in those days equivalent to about twenty thousand dollars), she sent some to her husband for himself and their two sons, but she also gave a goodly share to the needy in and around Prangins. For her personal use she retained very, very little. She assumed personal management of La Bergerie—this meant becoming concerned with the business details which had heretofore been in the hands of a hired caretaker—and whatever money she saved in this way she used for her beloved poor.

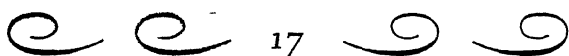
Wherever there was sickness or want, Clotilde went to offer her services. It was at the side of women in childbed, however, that Clotilde did her most exquisite charity. In those days when pregnant women depended for help on midwives, Clotilde found ample opportunities for her apostolate. In these visits of charity she often had the happiness of baptizing a newly born infant who showed signs of not living long. Sometimes a grateful Protestant mother acquiesced to Clotilde's suggestion that her child be baptized.

When one of the domestics at La Bergerie became seriously ill with a repulsive cancer, Clotilde insisted on personally taking care of her. She also had a specialist come, and it was the patient herself who told the doctor of Clotilde's charity. The patient said to him: "If care could have cured me, I would have been well long ago; for twice a day the good princess comes here, not only to bring me everything that I need but also to attend to this repulsive cancer with her own hands."

It was during these times of inner trials and external charities that the relationship between Clotilde and her husband underwent a new crisis. After his political defeat in 1877, when he was beaten in the Ajaccio election by the imperial candidate, Baron Haussmann, Prince Napoleon was most unhappy and restless. He came occasionally to

Prangins, not to see Clotilde but for various business purposes. If he needed money he advertised in the local newspaper the auction of some of the paintings, tapestries, and other art objects in La Bergerie, advertisements which Clotilde quietly withdrew after he left, so as not to bring disgrace upon her husband's name or that of her own family.

On his first visits from Paris to Prangins, Clotilde used to go to the Nyon railroad station to meet her husband; but when he began bringing with him some of his objectionable friends, she no longer went to greet his arrival. Although she was aware that her husband's friends were housed in the chalet near the villa, she made no issue of his conduct, feeling there was nothing to be gained if she did.



RETURN TO ITALY

Toward the end of 1877, Prince Napoleon wrote to Clotilde saying that he wished a more definitive settlement of their marital status. He knew that as a Catholic and an Italian, Clotilde would never consent to a divorce; but he wanted something more than the temporary and indefinite *status quo* which had prevailed since 1875.

Clotilde was not disturbed by her husband's latest step. She would have to consult her father, for she did not want to continue living alone at Prangins. She would rather return to Italy where she would at least have more opportunities to practice her Catholic faith. Meanwhile she continued as best she could her life of oblation.

After Holy Communion on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1877, as she knelt in thanksgiving, Clotilde thought of Pope Pius IX. Would God accept the offering of her life for the preservation of the life of the aged and ailing pontiff? She would willingly make the sacrifice of her life for the Pope if God would accept her offering.

Referring to this desire, she later wrote to Padre Bianchi:

I asked our Lord, if it were for His greater glory and for the greater good of the Church, that He take my life and spare the life of the Holy Father.

Now I leave everything to the Lord, to do what He wills; and with this I am content. I have lost all fear and I assure you that through the grace of the Lord, I feel ready for anything and in whatever moment He wishes to call me. . . . At least I shall have done as much as I can for the Holy Father.

I can say this much to you, Father: I would be happy, most happy, if the Lord took me so that I could in this way, with my life, help to repair the outrages done and being done against the Lord, His Church, and His Vicar. But this would be a very great grace and I do not deserve it.

Prince Napoleon kept insisting that their marital situation be resolved as soon as possible, at the latest by the beginning of the new year, 1878. King Victor Emmanuel had meantime offered Clotilde a residence in Italy, the ancient castle at Moncalieri. It was with mixed emotions that Clotilde thought of the prospect of returning to live in the castle in which she had spent some of the most carefree days of her girlhood. Moreover, her father had, by royal decree, bestowed upon her the title of Countess of Moncalieri. Now she would be the castellan of the castle whence her title had come. But notwithstanding her relief that she had a place to which she could go, she realized that a change would involve some hard adjustments. She wrote to Padre Bianchi:

What the Lord will decide for me, I do not know. I shall perhaps have to leave this town and return to Italy. You can understand what will be the consequences of this departure.

There will be sacrifices of all kinds to make; but I assure you that I am disposed to make them without

the least exception and with the greatest peace of soul.

The Lord suffices. With Him one has everything; all the rest are means which are never indispensable. If He takes from me some things, He will give me others.

In the midst of her negotiations for a definitive settlement with her husband, Clotilde received word early in January, 1878, that her father was critically ill from an attack of malaria. She immediately began preparations to go to Rome. Her heart was heavy. Her father was dying with the ban of excommunication on his soul. What were his thoughts, his sentiments, his memories as he faced death? Would he make his peace with God's Church before he died?

So many memories of her father's past rose from her subconscious as she hurried about with last-minute instructions to her eleven-year-old daughter and the one lady of honor at La Bergerie. Yes, her father had been a brave and honest king—did not his subjects call him *il Re Galantuomo*? But he had had his weaknesses and his sins, being man as well as king. And as king he had had his foolish moments, doing things which ordinary men could not afford. People still jested about some of the gifts he used to give to his female favorites—especially to "*la bella Rosin*," now the Countess di Mirafiori, to whom he had remained faithful for many years and whom he had taken as his morganatic wife eight years ago.

These distracting thoughts were soon banished as Clotilde remembered her father's need for prayer now that he lay dying in the Quirinal, the palace which less than eight years before had been taken by force from Pope Pius IX. Notwithstanding her concern about her father's soul, her trust in God kept her from becoming disquieted. She had offered herself as a victim for her father's salvation—and in

the depths of her heart she had a certainty beyond all human understanding that her trust would not be confounded, knowing with the Psalmist that "His tender mercies are over all His works."

She was just about to leave La Bergerie for the station in Nyon when a second telegram arrived announcing the death of King Victor Emmanuel II and his reconciliation with the Church. The Pope had lifted the excommunication. Her father was gone—but the prodigal had returned to his Father's House. Gratitude triumphed over the sorrow in her heart as she calmly unpacked her luggage, tears streaming down her face.

There was neither the permission nor the need for her to go to Rome now. She had asked the Holy Father for permission to go to Rome only in the event of the serious illness of her father. Now that he was dead, the permission, she felt, no longer held; and she could do more for his soul by remaining in Prangins. Her family, she knew, would be disappointed, even hurt by her absence—especially her brother Humbert, who would now be king. But this sacrifice of not being with her family, of not looking for the last time upon the face of her father, would be one more suffrage for the repose of his soul.

She later received details of the state funeral in Rome: of the hundreds of dignitaries who participated, of the thousands of Romans who mournfully stood and watched, of the Iron Crown of the Lombards which was carried after her father's coffin as the funeral cortege proceeded to the Pantheon, where her father's body was to be entombed. The crown had pressed the brows of Charlemagne, Charles V, Napoleon I, and other sovereigns; but King Victor Emmanuel had never presumed to put it on, thinking himself unworthy to wear a crown which contains a nail used in the crucifixion of Christ. Clotilde was glad that her

father's body had been buried in the Pantheon, once a Roman temple dedicated to all the gods of mythology but now a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She was glad that her brother was preparing a mausoleum on which would be inscribed *Victor Emmanuel II, Father of the Nation*. Above all, she was glad that the King her father had made his peace with the Church.

When Pope Pius IX learned that Princess Clotilde had not come to Rome because her father had died before she could reach him, he exclaimed, "What a truly Catholic woman! What a princess of the House of Savoy!" Clotilde, however, used no heroics in referring to her abstention. As she wrote to Canon Gazelli, her not going was merely a decision of prudence: "I was prepared to leave, everything being ready, when I received the dolorous announcement. Why go when I could not be of use to my father's soul? . . . Going to Rome would have meant assisting at demonstrations which would be more political than anything else. . . . The world may criticize me, but I do not care . . . for the world is not charged with the salvation of my soul."

The death of King Victor Emmanuel delayed for several weeks the final talk between Clotilde and Prince Napoleon. But at the beginning of February they met again and after a long discussion they agreed to separate permanently: she would live at Moncalieri with Maria Letizia; he, at Paris and Prangins with Victor and Louis. Before he left Prangins to return to Paris, Prince Napoleon told Clotilde that the boys would be permitted to write to her and visit Moncalieri during their vacations and, if she had no objection, that he might sometimes visit Moncalieri himself. The separation was amicable but Clotilde was relieved that it was final. And yet some years later, she was to confide to a friend that if she had had to make the decision again, she would not have separated from her husband, saying, "It would have

been a more perfect thing to suffer, remaining with him." Not that she had any remorse, for she never doubted the rightness of her decision. It was only because, as she grew in holiness, she comprehended more clearly that the highest form of fortitude consists in enduring, in bearing, in being patient under tension and suffering.

At the time of her separation from Prince Napoleon, Princess Clotilde was still young, only thirty-four, still lovely in spite of the simplicity, the austerity even, of her clothes and coiffure; and her brother, now reigning as King Humbert I with the beautiful Queen Margherita, would have welcomed her to his court. It is said that when Humbert as king went riding in his carriage for the first time in Turin, he had Clotilde sit beside the Queen while he sat opposite them, a procedure which was contrary to protocol. But Clotilde wanted nothing of the courts of either Rome or Turin. Her one desire was to dedicate herself more completely to a life of prayer, penance, and charity; and for this, Moncalieri would be better, much better. In preparation for this new life, Clotilde decided to make a spiritual retreat.

The day before she began her retreat, she wrote to Padre Bianchi:

I recommend to your prayers my days of spiritual retreat, which will begin tomorrow and end on Sunday, February 10. All has been settled and I do not want to begin a new life without the special help of the Lord.

Many graces have been given me during my life, especially during the last few years; and I understand their importance. Everything went for the best although I have suffered much. It has been all spiritual gain; hence, there is nothing to regret. I am content with everything and with all the sacrifices I shall yet have to make.

I shall always have the Lord. He alone must be sufficient for me.

During her retreat Clotilde received a telegram announcing the death of Pope Pius IX. It was less than a month since her father's death. The Pope and the King had been at loggerheads for much of their lives, but now they would understand exactly how everything works unto the providential shaping of God's plans for men. Clotilde prayed for the repose of the Pontiff's soul, knowing that popes, like kings, are men who can and do sin. And her filial heart was saddened even more when she later heard that the Italian government had denied the dying Pope's wish to be buried in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major.

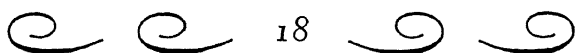
The date set for Clotilde's departure from Prangins was February 20. The mayor of Nyon and the pastor of the Catholic church in Nyon sent testimonial letters to Clotilde, expressing their regrets at her departure. The mayor wrote: "We shall never forget the salutary example given by Your August Person through the charitable works associated with your name. The poor and the suffering will remember with gratitude the manifold benefits they have received and all that you have done for the relief of the unfortunate." In his letter Abbé Gignoux expressed his regret at losing his "best parishioner," adding, "I do not therefore ask you to remember us at Nyon but I beg you to return to us."

Clotilde did not realize how much she had come to love the poor and the suffering whom she had succored, until she began to make her farewells. Would she ever see Nyon again? In those days Nyon in southwest Switzerland and Moncalieri in northwest Italy seemed very, very far apart.

Early on Wednesday morning, February 20, 1878, Clotilde, Princess of Savoy-Napoleon and Countess of Moncalieri, accompanied by her daughter and one lady of honor,

boarded the train at Nyon for Turin. From Turin it would be only four miles to Moncalieri.

On that same day, in Rome, Cardinal Pecci was elected pope, taking the name of Leo XIII.



A NEW LIFE BEGINS

Today Moncalieri, with its nine or ten thousand inhabitants and its former castle converted into a military academy, is merely a suburb of the highly industrialized city of Turin. In Clotilde's time, however, it still had much of the atmosphere of the typical feudal town: the huge, turreted castle situated on a hill and surrounded by a stone wall; the nearby Santa Maria della Scala, a fourteenth-century Gothic church with a medieval campanile and known as a "collegiate church" because it had a college or chapter of canons; and across the road from the castle, the cloistered Carmelite nuns with their monastery built on a steep incline. The name Moncalieri derives from the topography of the place, from its many paths and roads which, as the Italians say, *montano e calano*—lead up hills and down slopes.

Although Clotilde had planned to go to Moncalieri soon after her arrival in Turin on February 20, her actual departure did not take place until April 24. The delay was the result of a physical indisposition which had developed while she was en route from Nyon to Turin. When she arrived at the Royal Palace, her brother the King and her

sister-in-law the Queen insisted that she remain with them until she was completely rested and well. Moreover they felt that she could be of assistance in the reopening and remodeling of the apartments which had once been used by Queen Marie Adelaide and Queen Maria Teresa. These apartments had been closed at the deaths of the two queens in 1855 because the Royal Palace did not have another queen until the accession of Humbert I to the throne. Since King Victor Emmanuel II had remarried morganatically, the Countess di Mirafiori had never reigned as queen.

Many many memories, mostly happy ones, returned to Clotilde as she went from salon to salon in the palace which had once been the main residence of her childhood and girlhood. She was happy to see again old friends, especially Canon Gazelli, who agreed to resume her spiritual direction now that she would be living at Moncalieri.

Clotilde and King Humbert talked over plans for her new life at the Castle of Moncalieri. Part of the castle had been in use for some time—to house retired court employees and their families. The King offered to make some other arrangements for these pensioned servants in order to give his sister more of the castle for her own use, but Clotilde would listen to none of this. She told her brother that all she wanted was a room in some corner of the castle where she could live in retirement, nothing more. Her brother insisted that she have more and made certain provisions which she finally accepted. He provided for about fifteen domestics at the castle, of which five or six—including two male servants, a maid, and a cook—were designated to serve Clotilde, Maria Letizia, and the French lady of honor. These domestics would soon learn, however, that Clotilde took care of most of her needs herself. The King also arranged to have a *carabiniere* as a personal bodyguard for his

sister and he put at her disposal a carriage with two liveried coachmen.

Clotilde accepted all these conveniences as pure charity on her brother's part, as things to which she had no claim in justice. She thus expressed her sentiments to Padre Bianchi: "I have the fortune of living on the charity of my brother and this is the truth; were it not for him I would have had to find some way of livelihood. Everything which I shall have at Moncalieri (lodging, etc.) is merely lent to me for my use, and I am very happy to have it this way."

When Clotilde, with her daughter and the lady of honor, arrived at the Castle of Moncalieri on Easter Wednesday, April 24, the first thing she did was to go to the chapel to thank God. What a privilege to have again a chapel under the same roof and a chaplain who would not only say Mass daily for her and the other inhabitants of the castle but be at hand if she needed immediate guidance or advice.

She knew exactly which room she wanted for herself—the simple, green-and-gold-wallpapered room in one of the corners of the castle. It would serve as her bedroom, boudoir, library, and salon. The room was too large to be called a monastic cell but neither was it large enough to be called a salon. Opposite this room, across an adjoining gallery, was a much smaller room which Clotilde was to use as a dining room for herself, her daughter, and the lady of honor. She needed no more space. There were nearby rooms for her daughter and the lady of honor. Two of the larger apartments in the castle would be for her sons when they came to visit her during their vacations; there would also be an apartment set aside for Prince Napoleon if he ever cared to come; and the apartments which had always been reserved for the King and Queen of Italy would still be theirs to use.

The one room in which Clotilde was to spend the greater

part of the remaining thirty-three years of her life was furnished very simply: an iron bedstead with horsehair mattress and pillows; two small open bookcases; a washstand with a white porcelain bowl, a pitcher, and a soap dish; a small writing desk placed near the alcoved window; a round table in the center on which were a few family photographs; a number of straight-backed chairs; and a *prie-dieu*. Even the religious articles in the room were few and inexpensive. Hanging on the wall behind her bed were a crucifix and a picture of the Sacred Heart; on the wall opposite hung a picture of the Blessed Mother. Near her *prie-dieu* were a holy water font and three inexpensive, small statues—one of the Sacred Heart between those of the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph. Later she had a small altar erected in the adjoining gallery. The only castle-like thing about Clotilde's room was the double glass door leading out into a long, iron-railed balcony from which one could have a magnificent panoramic view of the snow-capped Alps in the distance, the Po River flowing nearby, and the whole city of Turin in the valley.

This room was never to be heated, not even on the coldest days in winter, and the winters at Moncalieri can be bitterly cold. There was and still is in the room a beautiful fireplace with a large gilt-framed mirror above it, but Clotilde never used either. It was only during the last few years of her life that she permitted the installation of a small coal stove in front of the fireplace. From her first winter as castellan, however, she made certain that the quarters of the others were heated.

In this monastic-like room Clotilde was to receive all her visitors—men and women, the rich and the poor, the peasants and the nobility, priests and monsignori. On these straight-backed chairs with their green-cushioned seats

would sit the King and Queen of Italy, the Queen Mother of Portugal, whenever they came to see their beloved sister. On one of these simple chairs would sit Cardinal Richelmy while he talked with a princess whom he revered as a saint. And on these same chairs would sit the children whom Clotilde was to instruct in catechism or prepare for their First Holy Communion, and the young seminarians whose tuitions were to be paid by her.

Clotilde had been at the castle only a few days when she did something which was characteristic of her—make out a daily schedule for herself, one which was as confining as any conventual or monastic schedule:

- 4:30 Rise; morning prayers; Matins, Lauds, and Prime of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary; an hour's meditation.
- 7:00 Mass; Holy Communion and thanksgiving.
- 8:00 Breakfast; work of various kinds.
- 11:15 Chapel, for visit to the Blessed Sacrament; Tierce, Sext, and None of the Little Office; examination of conscience for five minutes.
- 12:00 Dinner; recreation; reading of newspapers; work; walk.
- 3:30 Chapel, for Vespers and Compline of the Little Office; spiritual reading, one half hour; various prayers and prayers of the Confraternity of the Rosary, of the Angelic Warfare, etc.
- 5:30 In summer, the Way of the Cross on Fridays; in winter, the Way of the Cross a little after four o'clock since services begin earlier, rosary and Benediction at the parish church being a little after five. On returning, go to my room.
- 7:00 Supper; in winter, go to my room after supper; in summer, rosary and Benediction after supper. (Services differ according to the season;

for example, during Lent there is a sermon at eight, and on Fridays the Way of the Cross precedes the rosary.)

9:00 Chapel, for prayers, examination of conscience, and preparation for the next morning's meditation; then return to my room.

10:00 Retire.

In her schedule she even indicated the changes to be made on Sundays and feast days:

7:00 In chapel a little after seven. Say unfinished prayers if any; anticipate some of the prayers usually said in the morning, such as prayers for the various congregations, and Prime and Tierce of the Little Office.

8:00 Mass at the parish church; catechetical instruction when there is one; thanksgiving.

9:00 Breakfast.

10:30 Chapel, for Sext and None; examination of conscience; prayers. (In Lent and Advent, say these before the ten o'clock high Mass if possible; otherwise, on my return.)

11:00 High Mass at the parish church. (In Lent and Advent the high Mass is at ten o'clock. The sermons during these two seasons, as well as those on Sundays and feast days, serve as my spiritual reading.)

3:00, 3:30, 4:00, depending on the season. Assist at Vespers and Compline in the parish church; also at sermon, rosary, and Benediction. (In the summer, when there is no sermon on Sunday, spiritual reading in the chapel.)

On return from church, go to chapel; visit to the Blessed Sacrament for a quarter of an hour; Vespers and Compline of the Little Office; any other prayers to be finished. According to the need, especially if prayers are later in the par-

ish church, anticipate some of my other prayers before going there, so that I won't have too many to say after my return.

Many a religious would find the schedule which Clotilde followed day after day, month after month, year after year, penitential and, perhaps, exhausting. Yet in 1890, or twelve years after she had initiated this schedule, she said that for her it had been "very practical and without fatigue." But this was because she had become accustomed to an austere way of life. The early morning rising, for example, she had practiced from her girlhood. In her diary for 1858-1859, the hour for rising was usually indicated as five-thirty, sometimes even earlier.

As an aid to her spiritual progress, Clotilde obtained permission from Padre Bianchi to make privately the three vows of religion, namely, poverty, chastity, and obedience—to observe them in so far as they were compatible with her life in the world. These vows, which she pronounced for the first time on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1878, were renewed yearly until her death in 1911. Padre Bianchi would not permit her, however, until a year later to make a fourth vow for which Clotilde asked permission—the vow always to do that which is most perfect; and this vow too she renewed yearly.

Her letters indicate that Clotilde was able to observe the vows not only without worry or scruples but with self-assurance and freedom of spirit. In one of her letters to Padre Bianchi she wrote:

To that interior "I am enough for you" of my Jesus, which I always hear in my soul, is added the grace to go forward, to progress more and more, and always in deep peace and calm. Jesus takes away everything in order to put Himself in everything, everywhere, and in the place of all.

I cannot deny the interior progress which He has accomplished in me since I made the vows, and I think it will not be long before He will ask of me the vow (or at least the beginning of a more particular proof) of doing that which is most perfect. I should at least tell you that I feel this desire and I prefer to tell you so that when the day comes, you will the better be able to make a judgment concerning it.

For some time past—and even when I was still in Switzerland—I have tried to do everything in the best possible manner. Of late this manner of acting has become very easy, not giving me the least weariness.

Then she added with customary candor and humility, "But believe me, there are still many other things that do not go as they should. . . ."

A few weeks after she had pronounced her vows Clotilde received letters from her two sons telling her that they would spend part of the summer at Moncalieri. There was a lilt in her heart as she marked off the days on the calendar, and one morning there were no more days to mark off. She told her coachman to make ready the carriage as she was going to the railroad station in Turin to meet Victor and Louis.

The train was late, uncommonly late, and Clotilde in her floor-length, black taffeta dress, with its full skirt and simple white collar and cuffs, sat quietly in the waiting room. Anyone looking at her and her lady of honor, equally inconspicuous in a simple, dark dress, would never have recognized the Princess who had once been the first lady of the Kingdom of Sardinia and the second lady at the Imperial Court of France.

The train having finally arrived, Clotilde rose quickly and hastened with the others in the station towards the gates whence would emerge the incoming passengers. Then she

saw her sons coming towards her. How they had grown since she had last seen them, especially Victor who was now seventeen.

Clotilde succeeded in keeping back her tears as she kissed both of them. She tried to be casual with her remarks. "Your train was very, very late. You must be tired. Come, our carriage is waiting for you."

During the weeks which followed, Clotilde was with Victor and Louis at their meals, went outside into the castle park with them and Maria Letizia, noting with some satisfaction that the features of her sons were not so Napoleonic as those of her daughter, who every day looked more and more like her aunt Matilde. She went with her two sons to Turin, to show them the memorable places associated with the House of Savoy, especially the Royal Palace and the nearby palaces of Carignano and of Madama. These were new experiences for Victor and Louis, but although they seemed to be enjoying themselves, Clotilde was concerned about Victor—something was troubling him. . . .

One evening, in the approaching dusk, Clotilde and Victor were seated on a bench under one of the pine trees in the park of the castle. She sat quietly with her hands in her lap as he was recounting the events of his day at the nearby College of Charles Albert, which his great-grandfather had built for the Barnabite Fathers.

"I have had a happy summer here, Mamà," she heard Victor say, "so happy that I hate to think of returning to Paris tomorrow."

Clotilde looked at her son and nodded, as if to say, "And I think I know why."

It was this look of understanding on her part which melted the reserve which her son had been maintaining, for suddenly all his pent-up feelings burst out like water rush-

ing through a dam which has just been broken. Clotilde did not interrupt him as his words rushed on.

"Mamà, I don't get along with Papà. He's my father, I know; and I should do what he wants. But I can't, I just can't. I've tried but I can't. At the meetings at Rue Malesherbes, I cannot go along with his ideas, his principles, his plans for the Imperial Party. And if I disagree, he won't give me a chance to explain. He stalks out of the room or he turns on me with a barrage of threats and denunciations."

"I know, Victor, I understand," his mother said softly, putting her hand over his. "Now you're old enough to be told that these are the same reasons why I am not in Paris with your father and you and Louis."

The next day, as Clotilde bade good-bye to her sons at the railroad station in Turin, she whispered to Victor, "No matter what your father says or does, please be respectful to him."

But the relationship between Prince Napoleon and his elder son worsened with time and came to a climax with the death of the Prince Imperial, the heir of Napoleon III, on June 1, 1879.

Having been refused permission to join the French army, the Prince Imperial had joined the British contingent which had left for South Africa in March, 1879. Three months later he was murdered by some savage Zulus who stabbed him again and again with their assagais but who did not dare touch the gold chain with its Catholic medals which the Prince Imperial wore around his neck, fearing that the medals were some sort of amulets. The Prince Imperial had always been a religious young man, and on the day before his departure from England, he had written to Father Goddard: "I trust you will not think that the haste of my departure and the many details I must see to are

causing me to forget my duties as a Christian. Tomorrow, at half-past seven, I shall confess and receive Holy Communion for the last time in the Chislehurst chapel, where I hope to be buried, if I die."

Prince Napoleon and Princess Matilde went to Chislehurst for the funeral of the Prince Imperial, which was held on July 12, 1879. Prince Napoleon was anxious to be present at the reading of the Prince Imperial's last will and testament, taking it for granted that he was now the leader of the Bonapartists. His political dream was shattered, however, when he listened to the reading of the codicil which the Prince Imperial had added only a month before his departure for South Africa:

I have no need to recommend to my mother to leave nothing undone in order to defend the memory of my granduncle and of my father. So long as there are Bonapartes, the imperial cause will have a representative. The duties which our family owes to the country will not end with my death. When I am dead, the task of continuing the work of Napoleon I and Napoleon III falls to the elder son of Prince Napoleon, and I trust that my beloved mother, aiding him with all her strength, will thus give to those of us who will no longer be on earth, this last and supreme proof of her affection.

Prince Napoleon was so angered by the codicil that he again left Chislehurst without paying his last respects to the Empress. As always, he blamed her for whatever went contrary to his political aims.

The codicil notwithstanding, Prince Napoleon continued his role as leader of the Bonapartists. He had moved his headquarters from Rue Malesherbes to Avenue d'Antin; and there every Sunday his circle of artists, journalists, intellectuals, deputies, and senators gathered for dinner and

afterward lolled in the Bohemian atmosphere discussing the political future of France. At these after-dinner sessions Victor and Louis participated as onlookers while their father tried to dominate the thinking of his hearers, unaware that he was slowly alienating the conservative and Catholic Bonapartists throughout Paris.

It was at this time that the question of the codicil was being hotly discussed at an assembly of Bonapartists hostile to Prince Napoleon, and a resolution was passed to notify Prince Napoleon that he should abdicate in favor of his son Victor. But as soon as Prince Napoleon heard of the resolution, he published in all the newspapers his formal refusal to yield his authority.

The relationship between father and son became more and more strained as partisans of both sides claimed to be in the right. At one of the Sunday dinners at Avenue d'Antin the tension came out into the open. Usually Victor listened impassively to his father's eloquent pleas for his political and religious ideas; on this occasion, however, he looked pale, nervous, almost as if it pained him to hear what was being said. Would his silence be interpreted as implicit approval? He wanted to get up then and there to refute his father but he refrained, remembering his mother's parting words at Moncalieri.

After Prince Napoleon had finished his speech and the applause was over, Victor said to one of the guests who were present, "You understand, sir, that respect for my father would not permit me to interrupt him and come out in public contradiction. I only want to say that the ideas which he has placed before you for your consideration and approval are not mine. Unfortunately, all the friends of my father are not also mine."

Victor then turned and left his father's political head-

quarters, earlier than usual. That night, before retiring, he wrote a long letter to his mother in Moncalieri. . . .

Victor's letter came as no surprise to Clotilde, but the details of her son's growing rift with his father were new sword points to her sorrowing heart. She did not lose her peace. She had one more reason for intensifying her life of penance and charity.

This intensification of penance and charity continued throughout the thirty-three years which Clotilde spent at Moncalieri. It is comparatively easy for a Christian to perform an occasional act of mortification or penance, particularly if it is being done in the hope of obtaining a special favor or grace from God. It is when the occasional becomes habitual and when the only motive is love that virtue begins to approach the heroic. And Clotilde's penance and charity were habitual and motivated by a love which grew deeper and stronger with the years.

The cook at the Castle of Moncalieri attested that Clotilde's daily sustenance on days of fast, especially during Lent, consisted of two boiled or baked potatoes and some boiled greens or rice which had been seasoned with only a little salt. In her old age, when her doctor told her that she should no longer observe the fasts, Clotilde answered that she was not concerned about herself since she had already passed the ages at which her mother and father had died. At prayer, whether in her own chapel or in the Church of Santa Maria della Scala, she often knelt for hours at a time. In her room after her death were found the instruments of penance which she had used for years: a hair-shirt, a discipline, and two chains of iron, one which had been worn as a girdle next to her skin, and the other as an arm band. When the bed on which Clotilde had slept and died was dismantled after her death, the servants found the

boards which she had used. Maria Letizia, who happened to be present on the occasion, sighed as she said, "What a bed for a princess!"

Clotilde's life of penance went hand in hand with a rigid observance of poverty in anything that pertained to herself. Scrupulously clean in her person and her clothes, she had only what was absolutely necessary. Her black waists were mended and patched, her veil and stockings well darned. After she made her vow of poverty, she exchanged her silver and gold religious medals for some of common metal, and her rosary consisted of heavy wooden beads strung with iron chain. Until her death she continued to use a petroleum lamp in her room because it was the cheapest form of lighting. She wanted nothing wasted, not even the remaining crumbs of bread which she used to gather up and eat. All this personal austerity and poverty, however, were put aside when she had guests. When her sons or her husband or her brother the King sat at table with her, she was once more the gracious hostess of bygone days.

But it was in her all-embracing charity that Clotilde's love of God found its highest expression. Her works of charity were for any one in need—for the families in the castle, for the needy parishioners of Santa Maria della Scala, for the poor in the other parishes of Moncalieri. She nursed the sick, assisted women at childbirth, took care of the dying, and even bathed and dressed the dead.

On the first floor of the castle she kept a large storeroom stocked with furniture, clothing, shoes, linens, and household utensils which she distributed to the needy. King Humbert and later her nephew, King Victor Emmanuel III, sent her a large amount every year to be distributed as alms, and Clotilde did her best to see that the money went to the poorest of the poor. Many of the recipients of her benefactions were unknown to her, for she had an almoner who

helped her in the distribution of both goods and money. She received about three thousand letters a year begging for help of some kind. Often the demands were beyond her means but whatever she could do she did. She had one rule by which she lived—for herself, only what was strictly necessary; for others, everything else remaining. The townspeople used to say that if Princess Clotilde had ten *lire*, nine would go to the poor.

For the families living at the castle she had the solicitude of a mother. She made it a point to speak in the Piedmontese dialect whenever she was speaking to someone who did not know the literary Italian. Since many of the pensioned servants were old, there were frequent illnesses and occasional deaths among them. When any one of them became ill, Clotilde provided a doctor and medicine, visited and nursed the patient herself. When anyone was dying in the castle, she made certain that the person received the Last Sacraments, then kept a vigil of prayer at the bedside. If the person died, she helped prepare the body for burial, made the arrangements for the funeral, and paid the expenses.

She was on the alert that none of the personnel overworked. One day, when she noticed that an old woman servant was breathless in climbing the stairs, she permitted her to use the private stairway, which was shorter and easier to mount. And not long after, she arranged to have the old woman go for a vacation in the mountains.

Clotilde herself never took a trip which was not imposed by some necessity. For her own health and recreation a daily walk in the castle garden seemed enough. During her first two years at Moncalieri she went every Friday to Turin so that she could go to confession to Canon Gazelli; later, on account of his increasing infirmities, she selected one of the Barnabite Fathers in Moncalieri as her confessor.

She still continued to go to Turin once a week, usually on Saturday, but the purpose was to visit the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud and the Shrine of the Virgin of Consolation. She also used the occasion to go to the Royal Palace, where a room was always reserved for her, in order to give an audience to anyone who had requested to see her.

Since there were also young married couples living at the Castle of Moncalieri, there were occasional births. Clotilde told the expectant mothers that they were to call her at any hour of the day or night so that she could assist at the childbirth. In those days of high mortality of mothers and infants at childbirth, Clotilde feared that in case of death the child might not be baptized or the mother might die without the Last Sacraments if she were not at hand.

In a letter to Père Cormier on June 25, 1880, Clotilde gave these details of her life of charity at the castle:

I don't know if I have ever told you, Father, but here in the castle there is an assemblage of the pensioned or retired, comprising a number of families and having among them the old and the young, and also children of all ages. I seek to occupy myself with all of them, according to each one's needs, especially the sick and the dying. I consider them as a grace which the Lord has given me. When I first came here, I was advised to wait a little before doing anything, so that I could better understand the situation. I began by getting to know the various families, and after being here for about nine months, I felt that I knew enough about everything that I could begin to act. Now all goes well. . . . Last year I even had the consolation of assisting two who were dying. This year I have already taken care of two persons who were very ill, received the sacraments, and then became better—one was an old man seventy-nine years old, the other a young woman

of twenty-two. We have also had two births and we are expecting two more. You will understand, I am sure, that having decided on this way of doing a little good, I have to go everywhere and see everybody. There is always something to do—either actually helping people in a material way or listening to the recitals of their needs, their sorrows, etc.

One great consolation for me is accompanying the Blessed Sacrament whenever Holy Communion is to be brought to the sick. . . .

There is one chronic case which I am now taking care of, a young woman twenty-seven years old, who has spinal trouble. Her cure has been entrusted to me, and I go every evening to take care of her. She has been sick for four years but of late the disease has been progressing.

Father, I give you all these details because I know you are interested in what I am doing.

Besides her care of the sick, the dying, and the dead, Clotilde taught catechism to the children of the castle, especially those who were to make their First Holy Communion. Remembering her own preparation for First Holy Communion, she felt that she could never do enough to prepare these young souls to receive their Eucharistic God for the first time. She gave to each child an entire First Communion outfit, even to the underclothing, and arranged to have breakfast with the first communicants after their Mass and Communion, usually inviting also their parents.

Clotilde also helped young women to enter the various sisterhoods by providing for their dowries and anything else they needed. She financed the seminary education of at least twenty young men preparing for the priesthood, among them being her last two chaplains—Monsignor Giovanni Andrea Masera, who later became bishop of

Biella, and Canon Paolo Brusa, who after her death was to be active in promoting the cause for her beatification.

One of the priests whose education she financed, Amedeo Autelli, eventually left the Catholic priesthood and embraced Protestantism. His apostasy was one of the greatest sorrows of her life. She prayed constantly for him and often sent Monsignor Masera and Canon Brusa to visit him, in the hope of bringing him back to a sense of his priestly duty. While she was dying, she instructed Bishop Masera, who was at her bedside, to give the apostate priest the small statue of Mary Immaculate which she had kept on her *prie-dieu* for years and to tell him that she remembered the past when he was a good priest, forgot the present, and prayed for his future. When Amedeo Autelli received the statue and Clotilde's message, tears came to his eyes, so vivid still was the memory of all that Clotilde had done for him, the son of a man who had been a servant in the employ of Clotilde's brother Amedeo.

FINALE FOR PRINCE NAPOLEON

In her life far removed from the world, Clotilde nevertheless kept herself informed of the political climate in both Italy and France. In both countries anticlericalism was strong. At the beginning of Pope Leo XIII's pontificate, there had been an exchange of courtesies between her brother the King and the Pope, and the Italian government had deleted offensive clauses from the official forms which the bishops had been obliged to use when applying for their salaries, even though these were paid out of revenues which had previously belonged to the Church. But she knew that under Masonic influences the people of her beloved Italy were perpetrating outrages which would have shocked their ancestors. She actually wept when she heard what had happened during the night of July 13, 1881, when the body of Pope Pius IX was being removed from its temporary tomb in Saint Peter's to the Basilica of Saint Lawrence, the church outside the walls of Rome which Pius IX had chosen as his final resting place after he had been refused permission to be entombed in Saint Mary

Major's. A crowd of ruffians making obscene gestures and shouting, "Throw the old pig into the Tiber! Throw the old pig into the Tiber!" tried to break through the lines of prelates and *carabinieri* on either side of the simple hearse; and it was with difficulty that they were prevented from carrying out their sacrilegious intention.

In France the religious situation was no better. Léon Gambetta, who was the power behind the ministries, first in his office as president of the Chamber and later as prime minister, was avowedly anticlerical. And it was while Gambetta was at the height of his influence that a new crisis occurred in the political career of Prince Napoleon, creating a new problem for Clotilde in the cloistered peace of Moncalieri.

Late in the year 1882 Léon Gambetta died as a result of an accidental gunshot wound in his hand. Paris was uneasy, fearing some attempt at a *coup d'état* by either the Orleanists or the Bonapartists. On the morning of January 15, 1883, as Parisians were hurrying to their places of business or work, they saw the buildings and streets of the city placarded with large manifestoes signed with the name *Napoleon* in large capitals and reading:

Heir of Napoleon I and Napoleon III, I am the only living man whose name has ever been able to reunite 7,300,000 votes. My sons are still strangers to politics. The natural order is that they come after me, and they will remain faithful to the true Napoleonic tradition.

There has been talk of abdication, but this will never be. When there are duties to fulfill, abdication is a desertion.

These compromises, these mutual understandings, may suit princes who consider themselves as having rights superior to the will of the nation.

The Napoleons, the elected and the servants of the people, would not know how to act in this way.

What one plebiscite has established, only a new plebiscite can replace.

I do not represent a party but a cause and a principle.

This cause is everyone's, more than mine.

This principle is the right which a people has to name its head. Denial of this right is a crime against the sovereignty of the people.

Frenchmen, remember the words of Napoleon I: "Whatever is done without the people is illegitimate."

The French government moved quickly to dispel this new threat to the political *status quo* by arresting Prince Napoleon and confining him in a prison cell of the Conciergerie. The next morning his arrest made the headlines in most of the newspapers of France.

At Moncalieri, Clotilde debated within herself whether she should go to Paris. Later she was to learn that her sons and Princess Matilde visited Prince Napoleon while he was in prison, and that even the ex-Empress Eugénie, who could not be said to have any love for Prince Napoleon, made the long journey from England to see what she could do toward having him released.

But after praying and taking counsel, Clotilde decided against going to Paris. Instead, she got into communication with King Humbert, being convinced that he could secure more prompt action through diplomatic channels. Meanwhile she anxiously awaited further developments. After two weeks in the Conciergerie, Prince Napoleon was transferred to a convalescent home in Auteuil, owing to a fever he had developed while in prison. Eight days later, at nine o'clock in the evening of February 9, he was released, a well and free man.

Prince Napoleon's last imprudent move, however, had alienated an influential group of Bonapartists who prevailed

upon his son Victor to declare himself publicly as the pretender to the imperial throne and to name his supporters, practically all of whom were declared enemies of his father. When a second group of Bonapartists gave Victor a vote of confidence a month later, Prince Napoleon was infuriated by what he considered an act of betrayal on the part of his son. In his anger he wrote Victor a denunciatory letter, declaring that henceforth all was finished between them.

For several years the ambitions of Prince Napoleon continued in conflict with those of his son, but the political activities of both were brought to an abrupt end in 1886 when, on June 22, the French Senate passed a decree expelling from France all members of the houses of Bonaparte and Orléans. With his expulsion from France, the disillusioned Prince Napoleon, now sixty-five years old, decided to retire to his villa at Prangins. But first he visited Clotilde at Moncalieri.

Clotilde was shocked when she saw the haggard and grayish face of her husband. He was like a hearth in which the fire had just gone out. They walked together several times through the castle park, talking of casual things, neither one daring to speak of the situation which had brought them together again, neither one mentioning the name of their son Victor.

Prince Napoleon stayed only a few days at Moncalieri. When he left he told Clotilde that he was going to Rome, to the court of her brother, for a while. In bidding him good-bye, Clotilde promised him that she and Maria Letizia would visit him at Prangins as soon as he was established there. "You are always welcome to Moncalieri," she added, "even though I know things may be a little too quiet for you here."

But while her husband was trying to forget his political disappointments by attending the social functions at the

royal court of his brother-in-law and by joining the soirees in the salons of his cousin Princess Julia Bonaparte, Clotilde in Moncalieri was facing a new problem involving Maria Letizia.

Her daughter was now twenty-one, an authentic Bonaparte both in appearance and temperament. Throughout her youth she had been like her father—self-willed, worldly, given to extravagant tastes in dress and entertainment. One day she banked her bedroom with Easter lilies and then lounged in her chaise longue to bask in the sensuousness of their fragrance. Maria Letizia had a real affection for her mother but between them lay a world of difference in their desires and hopes. "My mother is all for heaven," she used to say, "but I am all for earth."

As Clotilde knelt in prayer in the chapel at Moncalieri, she often contemplated the painting which hung above the main altar. It depicted Saint Anne seated, with the child Mary kneeling beside her and with Saint Joachim standing in the background as if in the habit of watching over his wife and daughter. To Clotilde this was the image of the ideal Christian family. But her husband was far away and her daughter had little patience to listen to the things which mattered so much to her mother.

Like every other mother, Clotilde had hoped and prayed that her daughter might some day find a worthy husband; but she was taken aback when, early in the spring of 1888, Maria Letizia told her that she had fallen in love with Amedeo, the Duke of Aosta, and that he had asked her to marry him.

"But, Letizia, he is your uncle and almost twice your age. Moreover, he has three children by his first wife. Have you thought about all this?"

Yes, she had thought about everything, Maria Letizia told her.

Clotilde was distressed. She loved her brother and she

loved her daughter, but a marriage between the two somehow seemed undesirable, almost improper.

"We'll go to Prangins to talk the matter over with your father," she finally told Maria Letizia.

Before going to Prangins, Clotilde sought spiritual advice. She was told that although the blood relationship between Amedeo and Maria Letizia constituted a canonical impediment to their marriage, a dispensation could be obtained.

In May of that year, Clotilde and her daughter boarded the train in Turin to go to Prangins. At the station in Nyon they were happy to find Prince Napoleon awaiting them with his carriage.

Some of her husband's friends were at La Bergerie, but their presence no longer disturbed Clotilde as they had once disturbed her at the Palais-Royal in Paris. Clotilde was now forty-five years old and the years had mellowed her attitudes and judgments. One must learn to accept people as they are, with all their shortcomings, while praying and hoping that through the grace of God they may change and mend their ways.

She first spoke privately with her husband about their daughter's desire to marry her uncle. Prince Napoleon not only had no objection; he seemed pleased that his daughter wanted to marry a member of the House of Savoy. Then with Maria Letizia they worked out the plans for the wedding: it would take place in Turin, in the fall.

The marriage of Maria Letizia and Amedeo was solemnized in the Chapel of the Holy Shroud on September 11, 1888, at the nuptial Mass celebrated by Cardinal Alimonda, the archbishop of Turin. After the ceremony the salons of the Royal Palace were overflowing with guests, many of whom were Prince Napoleon's friends from France. Amedeo's three children were there, seemingly happy with their stepmother.

Clotilde was dressed in a simple gown of lavender silk, with a long, full skirt but having nothing of the bustles worn in the 1880's, which (as someone has aptly remarked) made a woman's side view resemble that of a centaur. This was one of the rare occasions on which she changed from her customary black.

After the wedding Prince Napoleon returned to Prangins and Clotilde to Moncalieri. Now she was really alone. Her husband, her sons, and her daughter were at a distance from her. For the next two years she rarely saw them, but though she missed them, their absence perfected the detachment which she felt God was asking of her. She had also lost Padre Bianchi, who had died in Rome on June 25, 1885. She felt the loneliness of his absence, but his death too had been a part of the process of detachment. On the first anniversary of Padre Bianchi's death she had written to Père Cormier: "It is a year today since the good Padre Bianchi left us. It is a great sacrifice which the divine Master has asked of me since I had limitless confidence in him; but I am content to do the Will of our Lord before all and above all things."

In this paradoxical detachment of "caring and not caring," caring because humanly she missed her loved ones and not caring because supernaturally she wanted God's Will more than anything human, she went quietly about her routine of prayer, penance, and charity, always hearing in her heart, "Whatever you do to these, the least of My brethren, you do to Me."

The human joys in her life were few, very few. When her daughter gave birth to a son in 1889, who was named Humbert, Count of Salemi, she realized that in supernatural detachment—in contrast with natural indifference—one's capacity for human joy is not only not decreased but increased. As she took the newly born infant into her arms and pressed him to her heart, she felt again all the

joys of her own motherhood. Her grandson, her first and only grandchild, her daughter and her brother's baby—it all seemed so strange.

But if supernatural detachment does not lessen one's capacity for human joy, neither does it lessen one's sensitivity to human sorrow. On October 19 of that same year, 1889, she received a telegram from her sister, Queen Maria Pia of Portugal, informing her of the death of King Louis of Portugal. Clotilde longed to go to her sister, to comfort her in her bereavement; but the journey would take many days and she might not even arrive in time for the funeral. Clotilde's decisions were always in terms of what would be better for the other person involved. It would be a consolation for her to see her sister again; but prayers and indulgences were the only things which could help her brother-in-law's soul, and these she could give him by remaining at Moncalieri. So she remained at Moncalieri.

She had had a great affection and admiration for King Louis of Portugal, ever since she had first met him on the day he married her sister at the Royal Palace in Turin. King Louis had been a good king. He had kept himself outside and above party politics, had encouraged letters and sciences, even translating himself Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into Portuguese; above all, he had been great in his Christian compassion, for he had abolished slavery in all the Portuguese territories.

Three months later, on January 18, 1890, Clotilde's brother Amedeo died from pneumonia. As soon as she heard of his critical illness, Clotilde hurried to his bedside, in time to receive his last breath. Relative to his death, she wrote, "He died as a good and true Christian, joining in all the prayers which were suggested to him."

After her husband's funeral, Maria Letizia returned to live at Moncalieri, and Clotilde tried to forget her sor-

row as she helped in the upbringing of her grandson. Occasionally Prince Napoleon came to Moncalieri to see his wife and daughter and to play with his grandson. Clotilde watched him closely, hoping to see some change in his feelings toward religion. He was an old man now, almost sixty-eight. Referring to her observations, she wrote to a trusted friend: "Today he seems more tranquil but I think he is still the same, perhaps even worse. The Lord knows all—perhaps ultimately it will be for God's greater glory. As for me, patience!"

Clotilde's trust in divine Providence remained unshaken. Even if her husband were to die without having given any evidence of change in his feelings, she would not falter in her trust. She did not know then that it was this trial of her faith which was gaining for her husband graces beyond her most daring hopes. She saw no change in him, only that he seemed more tranquil. She did not know that in his lonely moments in his room at Prangins he occasionally picked up and read the New Testament, meditated on some of the passages in the *Imitation of Christ*, both books being always on his desk. During the many months he spent in Rome he was seen entering the Basilica of Saint Peter, sometimes in the morning to assist at Mass, but more often in the late afternoon, remaining there for a long time, with his back leaning against a pillar near the tomb of Pope Pius VII—the sovereign pontiff whom his uncle, Napoleon I, had tried to vanquish. Disillusioned and lonely, he confronted this one indisputable fact—that dynasties and empires fall but that the Church goes on because, in his words, "It is a superhuman thing."

But what really impressed Prince Napoleon were the archaeological researches of the time. He attended the lectures of the archaeologist Giovanni Battista de Rossi, who had excavated the catacombs and the Colosseum and so

had laid the foundations for a new scientific study of the Early Church; he discussed the relation between the facts of archaeology and the truths of Christianity with Cardinal Mermillod, formerly bishop of Geneva, with his cousin Cardinal Bonaparte, and with Abbé Pujol, once a chaplain at the Imperial Court; he went to view the discoveries in the catacombs along the ancient Appian Way. There was no longer any doubt about the historicity of Saint Peter's advent to Rome, and here in the bowels of the earth was all the testimony any reasonable man could demand for a compelling motive of faith. Prince Napoleon had always thought of religion as a sweet illusion, perhaps a necessary illusion, for a suffering humanity, but never as a matter of transcendent truth. Now it seemed that the findings of archaeology were placing some substance under the illusion.

Because Clotilde knew nothing of this metamorphosis in her husband's thinking, it was with a heavy heart that she received the telegram on Saturday morning, February 28, 1891, informing her that Prince Napoleon was critically ill with pneumonia at the Hôtel de Russie in Rome, situated near the palace in which Madame Mère, the Bonaparte matriarch, had died. Would she please come to Rome since Prince Napoleon was calling for her?

Her first thought was to send a telegram to Cardinal Bonaparte, asking him to secure permission from Pope Leo XIII so that she could go to Rome. She felt that the permission which she had secured from Pope Pius IX was no longer in force, and she had never thought of having the permission renewed when she wrote to the new pope conveying her good wishes at the time of his elevation in 1878. She wanted another express permission, especially since Pope Leo XIII had reaffirmed the Holy See's con-

demnation of the Italian government's seizure of the papal territories.

While she waited for an answer from Rome, she and her daughter prepared to leave. Clotilde sent a telegram to her son Victor, begging him to go to his father in spite of the estrangement between them. She also telegraphed her son Louis; but since he was now a general of cavalry in the Russian army, it was not likely that he would be able to make the long journey and arrive in time. For some unaccountable reason, the permission from Pope Leo XIII did not reach Moncalieri until March 5, but Clotilde would not leave until she had the papal permission in her hands. During the ten hours on the train from Turin to Rome, Clotilde prayed fervently, banishing with vigor the doubts which were tempting her faith and trust. The park of Racconigi was now the garden of Gethsemane as she kept articulating within the depths of her being, "Not my will but Thine be done."

She and her daughter were met at the railroad station in Rome by some of her brother's aides-de-camp and taken directly to the Hôtel de Russie. When she entered her husband's room, she was greeted by Prince Napoleon's devoted secretary, François Berthet Leleux, who was later to write a biography of his master entitled *Le Vrai Prince Napoléon*, in which he extolled the Prince and belittled Clotilde by referring to her piety as "*piété d'imagerie*." Leleux, a Protestant, was only twenty years old when he became secretary to Prince Napoleon in 1874. In his devotion to his master, he resented anything which contradicted the image which he had formed of Prince Napoleon.

Monsieur Leleux led Clotilde to her husband's bedside where two French Sisters of Charity were in attendance. Prince Napoleon was critically ill but as soon as he saw his

wife, he put out his arms saying, "*Ma bonne Clotilde!*" During the few days which were remaining of his mortal life, whenever he spoke of or to her, it was always, "My good Clotilde, my saintly Clotilde."

Clotilde bent over and kissed him on the forehead, realizing that death was close, very close.

Day and night Clotilde was at her husband's bedside. The only time she left him was early in the morning, to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion at the nearby Church of Santa Maria del Popolo. Most of the time Clotilde said nothing as she sat holding her husband's hand. What does one say to a dying man if he doesn't believe, if he doesn't hope. What is there to say? So she said nothing. She only sat beside him—believing, hoping, and loving for him.

Between four-thirty and five o'clock on the morning of March 15, Prince Napoleon took a turn for the worse. Clotilde sent for Cardinal Mermillod and arranged to have exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament for two days in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo.

The Cardinal came to the hotel as soon as it was possible for him to get there, but he came incognito. The Cardinal was alone for some time with Prince Napoleon. When he came out of his room at the end of three-quarters of an hour, Cardinal Mermillod told Clotilde that her husband was in very good dispositions, that he had been greatly impressed when he was reminded that Napoleon I and Napoleon III had died reconciled with the Church, and that Cavour and Victor Emmanuel II had both asked for the Last Sacraments before they died. Cardinal Mermillod went back into the sickroom several times, each time speaking with the dying man, who seemed to respond more and more to the promptings of divine grace as his hold on the things of this world was slipping away. At nine o'clock

the Cardinal left the hotel, convinced that Prince Napoleon wanted to receive the Last Sacraments. As he was leaving, he said to Clotilde, "The prayers of Your Highness have effected this miracle."

Shortly after the Cardinal had left, King Humbert I and Queen Margherita arrived. Seeing that Prince Napoleon kissed the crucifix which Clotilde put to his lips from time to time and that he also tried to repeat the ejaculatory prayers which she was suggesting to him, the King bent over and whispered, "One is more tranquil in the face of death after the Last Sacraments have been received." Meanwhile Pope Leo XIII had given Abbé Pujol every faculty to absolve one who for many years had been a public enemy of the Church.

About seven o'clock on the morning of March 17, Abbé Pujol received Prince Napoleon's profession of faith, then gave him sacramental absolution and administered extreme unction. Although he was breathing with difficulty, Prince Napoleon's mind seemed lucid as he tried to recite the Pater Noster with the Abbé.

When Victor, who had just arrived, approached his father's bedside, Prince Napoleon looked at his son for a few moments, then closed his eyes. He either could not or did not want to recognize him. Clotilde looked at her son with understanding and sympathy—they were both trying to do all that was humanly possible to comfort the dying man in his last hours.

Soon after, there was another turn for the worse in the condition of Prince Napoleon. Once or twice before lapsing into unconsciousness, he looked around deliriously with his eyes which could no longer see and called out, "Where is my good—my saintly—Clotilde?"

Clotilde knelt beside him, took his hand in hers, and together they passed through Prince Napoleon's valley of

death. She remembered the words of Isaias and was comforted: " 'Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And even if she should forget, yet will not I forget you,' says the Lord almighty."

Prince Napoleon died in his wife's arms while he was having a spasm at a little after seven o'clock that evening. He would have been sixty-nine years old in September. Besides Clotilde, in the room when he died, were Princess Matilde, Cardinal Mermillod, Abbé Pujol, the two Sisters of Charity, François Leleux, and a messenger boy.

As soon as the news was relayed to the Quirinal, King Humbert, Maria Letizia, Victor, Prince Roland Bonaparte, and several others hurried to the Hôtel de Russie. When they arrived they found Clotilde still kneeling at the bedside of the dead prince. Shortly thereafter, Queen Margherita, dressed in black and visibly moved, arrived to give her condolences to her sister-in-law.

To her brother's invitation that she go to the Quirinal with him, Clotilde answered, "For me Rome is the Hôtel de Russie." The King tried to explain to his sister that she need not enter the Quirinal. She could stay in the adjoining *palazzina*, which their father, King Victor Emmanuel II, had built. "Not tonight, Humbert. Maybe tomorrow we'll have lunch together in the *palazzina*, if it will please you that I do so."

At eight o'clock that evening the news of the death of Prince Napoleon was made public. All Rome was talking of the Prince's return to the Church of his baptism, but the next morning the Masonic newspapers denied the fact of his conversion.

Dressed in black—the frock coat decorated with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor and with the medallion of the Order of the Annunciation—the body of Prince Napoleon was laid out in the room in which he had died. An

adjoining room was converted into a chapel in which the first Mass for the repose of his soul was celebrated at seven o'clock on the morning of March 18 by Monsignor Anzino. A little later in the morning another Mass was celebrated at which were present King Humbert, Queen Margherita, and the various princes and princesses of the House of Savoy and the House of Bonaparte.

King Humbert and Maria Letizia remained with Clotilde in a private apartment at the Hôtel de Russie until the body of Prince Napoleon was taken with full military honors to the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, where the solemn funeral Mass was sung. Out in the piazza, crowds gathered, waiting to catch a glimpse of the princess who already was becoming known for her wide charities.

Prince Napoleon had wanted to be buried either in the Invalides in France or in Corsica. He had written in his last will and testament: "If I cannot be entombed in the Invalides, I want to be buried in Corsica, on one of the islands at the entrance to the Gulf of Ajaccio. The monument is to be simple—a granite pyramid that can be seen from the sea is to be over my grave. This monument, beaten by the winds and the sea, will be an emblem of my agitated and tormented life."

But when the French government refused permission for Prince Napoleon's interment in France or Corsica, King Humbert ordered that his brother-in-law's body be entombed at Superga, in the crypts in which today lie buried five kings, eight queens, and forty-two princes and princesses of the House of Savoy.

Clotilde saw to all the details for her husband's burial. When Paolo Boselli, who had been selected to compose the Latin epitaph for Prince Napoleon's tomb, showed her what he had composed, she approved of everything but said that there was one omission—the fact that he had died in

the Lord. So Boselli added, *Obiit in Domino*. She said this was more important than the facts that he was the son of King Jerome of Westphalia and that at the time of his death he was the closest living relative of the great Napoleon I.

When the special train bearing the body of Prince Napoleon, as well as Clotilde, the King and Queen, Maria Letizia, Victor, and a large entourage of mourners and attendants, arrived at the station of Porta Nuova in Turin, it stopped long enough for the civil authorities to pay their respects. Princess Clotilde, her face hidden by a long black veil, descended from the train on the arm of the Duke of Genoa and went directly to the waiting room which had been prepared for the royal family.

While Maria Letizia talked with the Count of Turin and the Duke of Genoa, and Victor, accompanied by the Duchess Isabella, shook hands with different members of the civil authority, Clotilde kept sobbing quietly. This was the station from which she and her husband had left on their wedding day thirty-two years ago. When one of her two ladies in waiting whispered, "Your Highness has so much to be thankful for in the Christian death of His Highness," Clotilde smiled and answered, "Yes, I never expected so much!"

At ten-thirty, in a special funicular train, Clotilde and the others proceeded to Superga. At the bottom of the steps of the Basilica of Superga the funeral cortege was met by Monsignor Pavarino who gave the absolution, assisted by Monsignor Anzino, the members of the palatine clergy, and the chaplains of the basilica. Then the coffin was lifted by a group of *bersaglieri* and carried on their shoulders into the basilica. In the middle of the church had been erected a catafalque covered with black velvet, and here the coffin was placed while Monsignor Anzino gave another absolu-

tion and recited the prayers for the dead. Finally the *bersaglieri* carried the coffin into the lower crypt for entombment.

From Superga, Clotilde returned immediately to Moncalieri. The events of the last few weeks had stirred her deeply and she wanted to be alone. She knew that everywhere in Italy and France the Christian death of her husband was being talked about—sometimes with Christian gratitude, sometimes with incredulity. Even Pope Leo XIII had been astonished. Lifting his eyes to heaven, he had exclaimed, "The Infinite Goodness has such great arms that they can receive all who turn to Him."

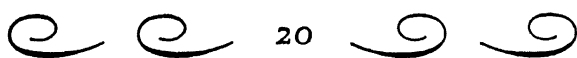
In answer to a letter of condolence from Canon Gazelli, now a very old and ailing man, Clotilde wrote from Moncalieri on March 29, 1891:

Your goodness, dear Father, and the interest which you have always shown in me from the time I was a little girl, assure me of a special remembrance in prayer now that it has pleased the Lord to loose me from the bonds which He Himself willed for me more than thirty-two years ago. Thank you for your prayers for the soul that is no longer among us; I recommend his soul always to your prayers. Please unite with me in thanking God for the graces given my husband before he left this world.

Clotilde did not forget her husband after his death. She arranged to have Masses said for him in all the churches and chapels of Moncalieri, and every month there was a Mass for him in the Church of Santa Maria della Scala. As she prayed at these Masses she felt closer to her husband than she had ever felt during his lifetime—they were now united in a love which transcended the differences which had once driven them apart. Whenever she spoke of her husband, it was only of his good points, saying that he had

been considerate of her in many ways. She would not listen to any criticism of him. When she read the detrimental account of Prince Napoleon in the biography of Canon Gazelli—*Un Prete d'ieri* (*A Priest of Yesterday*)—written by Count Nicolas de Robilant after the Canon's death, Clotilde protested vigorously and demanded that the letters which she had written to Canon Gazelli, and which Count de Robilant had used, be returned to her.

Prince Napoleon's death left Clotilde free to give her life a new orientation, and for some time she gave serious thought to the idea of entering a convent or monastery. She was forty-eight years old, with graying hair which was to turn white prematurely; but her health was good and the schedule which she had been following for years was as austere as that of any convent or monastery which she might enter. Her spiritual directors, however, were unanimous in their opinion that it was God's Will that she continue her apostolate in the world. Even Cardinal Andrea Carlo Ferrari, the archbishop of Milan, concurred, saying, "Princess Clotilde can do more good by staying in the Castle of Moncalieri than if she entered a cloister because the example of those in high places is always a more compelling force on the masses than the example of those in lowly positions."



“THE SAINT OF MONCALIERI”

So Clotilde stayed at Moncalieri until her death twenty years later. The townspeople became accustomed to seeing “the Saint of Moncalieri,” as she was now called, as she went to her parish church or on an errand of mercy, in her long black coat of rough serge and wearing a black pillbox toque with its black ribbons tied under her chin and its short black veil falling gracefully in the back. Usually she was accompanied by the Countess Irene Galleani d’Agliaño and by a royal *carabiniere*.

The Countess d’Agliaño, a very religious woman who had wanted to become a nun but could not because of her poor health, entered the service of Clotilde in 1883 and remained until Clotilde’s death. The Countess too dressed in black, nun-like clothes. But a bit of dash and color was added by the *carabiniere*, who was always on hand to open the outside gates for the two women and to accompany them whenever they left the castle grounds. He wore a short black jacket with shiny buttons and bright piping, turquoise trousers with a wide red band down the outer sides, a black

hat with an upturned, semicircular rim at the back, and white gloves. From his belt dangled a pistol and a saber, both of which he knew he would never need.

Clotilde left the castle grounds once a day at least, to make the Way of the Cross and to attend afternoon rosary and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in Santa Maria della Scala. This was Clotilde's parish church since it is only a five-minute walk from the castle. She always walked there, even in the coldest winter weather; but to avoid attracting attention, she usually entered by a side door. When she first came to Moncalieri, she used to take the first empty pew which she found, but later the canons of Santa Maria della Scala insisted that she occupy the green-draped pew which they arranged for her in front, on the Gospel side of the main altar. But if she agreed to this arrangement—feeling perhaps that she would be less distracted and would be nearer the altar—she would not permit the observance of another courtesy usually accorded royalty on Sundays, that of being met at the door by someone bearing holy water for her.

Although she attended daily Mass in her own chapel, she was careful to attend Mass and other services in the parish church on Sundays, during Holy Week and the Forty Hours, and on other special occasions. All the parishioners were impressed by the serene countenance of the Princess as she knelt in her place, usually with her head slightly bent and her hands joined. Even children were impressed by her smile as she left the church, and they often stood at the door to watch her pass.

Michele M. Favero, one of the Barnabite Fathers of Moncalieri, tells in the preface to his biography of Princess Clotilde that as a small boy he used to be awed by the sight of the Princess kneeling immovable in her green-draped pew. He met Clotilde close only once, when he was

a small boy, and she, a woman in her fifties. It was a Sunday evening, after Vespers, while he waited near the holy water font to offer her some holy water from his own fingers—and he never forgot the profound impression she made on him as she took the proffered water, smiled, and said, "Thank you!"

Clotilde was a good parishioner in every sense of the word. It was customary in those days for parishioners to join the priest with lighted candles in their hands whenever he went to bring Holy Communion to the sick or dying. Clotilde also joined whenever she happened to be in church and learned that Holy Communion was to be brought to someone's home.

One bitterly cold wintry morning, Clotilde and a few others were waiting at the church door to accompany the pastor on a sick call. It was not only bitterly cold; the roads were icy and dangerous. When the pastor noticed Clotilde ready to accompany him, he said, "Your Highness, we are going to the hill and it is so cold."

But Clotilde, smiling and motioning him away with her right hand, said quietly, "Go ahead, go ahead." Then, with the others, she followed the priest to his destination.

The Carmelite monastery, situated across the road from the castle, was also an object of Clotilde's special interest and help. When the nuns were in danger of losing their monastery, Clotilde made the necessary financial settlement which enabled them to continue their monastic life. Taking advantage of the royal privilege of ingress into a cloister, Clotilde visited the nuns several times a year. She always went there on the Feast of Saint Teresa of Avila and on the feast day of the prioress. On such occasions she assisted at Mass with the nuns, went to Holy Communion before the prioress, and partook of the frugal Carmelite breakfast. She then visited informally with the nuns, inquiring about

their health, their families, and providing for anything they needed.

Whenever one of the nuns was very ill or dying, Clotilde always visited her in her cell. On one occasion she visited a nun who in her illness was covered with foul-smelling sores. Clotilde insisted on taking care of her while the other nuns went to choir for Vespers.

Clotilde's external charities, however, were never permitted to lessen her life of prayer and contemplation. Actually her charities were but the flowering of her prayer and contemplation. Being a Dominican, she was putting into practice the motto of the Order—*Contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*. Clotilde's life was a good example of the contemplative-apostle, following the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas: "As it is better to illuminate than merely to shine, so it is better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate."

Besides her daily exercises of prayer, Clotilde made a day of recollection once a month and a ten-day retreat once a year, the latter usually beginning on November 29 and ending on the morning of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Her notes made during her retreats indicated the customary thoroughness with which she did everything. For example, at the end of her retreat in 1885, she made these detailed observations:

All for Jesus! Beginning the retreat exercises on the evening of November 29, the first Sunday of Advent, I offered myself totally to the Lord so that He could do with me whatever He wished, asking that He enable me to divest myself of self and to make myself all pure; and further, through a faithful correspondence with grace, to be before Him like an object He has made, which gives back to Him as much as He has put

into it, for His greater glory, for sinners, and for the holy souls in purgatory.

Here are the observations which I have made during the course of my retreat and the points on which I think the Lord wishes me to change:

1. The best employment of time. To move a little faster, to make better use of time.
2. To recite the Office more attentively, more seriously.
3. To draw more profit from the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, residing in this house and for me. To be more attentive and not neglect the opportunities to visit Him.
4. To give greater attention to the examinations of conscience, especially to the one in the evening which is generally not made or made without profit.
5. In the morning, while dressing, to say short prayers and ejaculations, to reflect on the meditation to be made.
6. In the evening, while undressing, to think of some passage from the fourth book of the *Imitation* as preparation for the next day's Holy Communion.
7. In my relations with inferiors or with the poor, to be more affable, becoming truly interested in their needs. To see Jesus in them, occupying myself with their petitions and with almsgiving. To place myself more easily at the disposal of my neighbor.
8. To pay more attention to the perfect performance of every action, since I feel that the Lord is more clearly demanding this perfection of me.

These are the resolutions which I think the Lord desires of me. To these observations I add another, namely, that of the interior work which I always feel progressing within me: detachment from everything which is not Jesus or which is not a matter of duty; the desire to live hidden, unknown, mortified interiorly and exteriorly; my need of Jesus, for Him alone to be

humble, to be diffident of myself, to suffer humiliations, all according to the spirit of our Holy Rule of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, of my vows of religion, of the vow of perfection, and of the offering as victim. I desire to have no will except that of the Lord, and to consume myself out of love for Him.

Besides her retreats, Clotilde continued her weekly visits to the two shrines dearest to her heart, namely, the Holy Shroud and the Virgin of Consolation. When the Holy Shroud was again to be exposed for the veneration of the faithful, from May 25 to June 3, 1898, the occasion being the fourth centenary of the building of the Cathedral of San Giovanni in Turin, Clotilde did something for which the Christian world owes her a debt of gratitude. She arranged to have the Holy Shroud, which is about fourteen feet long and three and a half feet wide, fully extended in a long frame and protected by a sheet of Bohemian glass so that it could be placed above the main altar in the cathedral.

Among those who visited the exposed Shroud was an amateur photographer named Secondo Pia. Being interested in archaeological projects, he took a photograph of the extended Shroud; but when he immersed his photographic plate in the developing solution, he was astonished to find appearing on it, not the ordinary negative but a positive picture depicting the frontal and dorsal images of a man who had been scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified, and whose side had been pierced with a lance. The imprints of Christ's body on the Shroud had appeared blurred and indistinct because they are negatives.

Pia's photograph caused considerable surprise and interest at the time but it was not until the Holy Shroud was again exposed in 1931 that a professional photographer took better pictures which enabled eminent scholars and

scientists to advance their theories explaining how a negative image, similar to a photographic negative, can be produced on a piece of linen. One of these theories, the vapo-graph theory, states that the negative images of Christ were produced when the ammoniacal vapors emanating from His body acted on the powdered aloes which had been used in His burial.

Clotilde had arranged for the glass covering merely to protect the Holy Shroud from dust. But in the Providence of God it marked the beginning of the many scientific studies which have been made on the Shroud at the International Center of Sindonology in Turin. It is probable that Clotilde never saw Pia's photograph of the Holy Shroud. Her faith and love were strong enough not to need a prop in her belief of its authenticity. Her belief in the genuineness of the Holy Shroud was as strong as that of Duke Charles Emmanuel II of Savoy, who had had the magnificent chapel built for its preservation. It is said that when the Duke was dying in 1673 he asked that the Holy Shroud be spread out before him so that he could reverently kiss it and offer to the Eternal Father its precious bloodstains in expiation of his sins.

While Clotilde was praying before the extended Shroud at the exposition of 1898, she too believed with all her heart that He who had lain in the winding sheet was He who had said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to Myself." And more and more He was lifting her to Himself.

Clotilde's life of prayer and charity, however, never interfered with her status as a member of a reigning royal family. She was as zealous in upholding her dignity as a princess of the House of Savoy as she was in maintaining her humility as a creature, whose hands are filled only if they are filled with gifts received from a beneficent and loving

Creator. As Cardinal Richelmy, archbishop of Turin, said after her death, "Princess Clotilde knew how to unite royalty with the virtue of humility."

Clotilde accepted her status as a princess with the same simplicity with which she would have accepted her status had she been born a peasant. It was all a matter of divine Providence. Human fulfillment and sanctity were, for her, a matter of growth in love, not of status. At the same time she felt that she had no right to alienate any prerogatives which in the established order of things belonged to her. So if she permitted a countess to bend down and kiss her hand, Clotilde immediately made a return by kissing the countess on the face. For the gesture of protocol she gave an act of love which before God asserted an equality between them, greater than the inequality established by human precedence.

It was Clotilde's regard for the traditional honor of the House of Savoy which lay behind her protest when Maria Letizia said that she had decided to send her son to the College of Charles Albert for his education. Clotilde had nothing against the college, especially since it had been founded by her grandfather, King Charles Albert of Sardinia. It was merely that it was not a military academy, and as she said to Maria Letizia, "The House of Savoy has known only two professions for its princes—the military and the ecclesiastical."

But she was equally quick to remonstrate with her grandson when as a boy he had shied away from an urchin near the castle gates. On that occasion Clotilde took the clean hand of her grandson and put it in the grimy hand of the urchin as she said, "Humbert, before God, he is your brother even though his hands are dirty. His hands are dirty because he has to work for his daily bread."

When she was a little girl Clotilde had said that she was glad to have been born a princess because a princess has more responsibilities. She might have added that a princess often has tragic sorrows which she might not have had, had she not been born a princess. During the last decade of her life, Clotilde knew such tragic sorrows: the assassination of her brother, King Humbert I, in 1900, and the assassinations in her sister's family in 1908.

On the morning of July 30, 1900, as Clotilde was about to enter the chapel at the Castle of Moncalieri she was handed a dispatch saying that her brother had been assassinated by an anarchist the evening before. He had been shot in the heart as he was leaving the gymnasium in which he had attended a tournament, and died soon after. For a moment Clotilde was overwhelmed. Assassinated! Her only brother. Was a priest able to reach him before he died? Recovering herself she turned to the Countess Irene d'Agliano, "They have assassinated King Humbert but we must not lose courage. We must pray for his soul."

She then entered the chapel. She heard Mass and received Holy Communion as usual. The others in the chapel never dreamed of the tragedy which was crushing Clotilde's heart as she remained after Mass to finish her thanksgiving. This is what she did every morning. She then rose from her knees, folded her chapel veil, and put it away in its customary place—as she did every morning.

On leaving the chapel, she said to the Countess, "We must prepare to go to Monza at once. The Queen must be crushed by her sorrow."

Monza is a fairly large city in the province of Milan, and the royal family had a villa there, built in the eighteenth century, which is now a school of arts and crafts. Since it is in Lombardy, Monza had never been papal

territory; hence Clotilde could go without first having recourse to Pope Leo XIII.

At Turin, Clotilde was met by Marquis Guiccioli, the prefect of the city, who offered her his condolences. Later the Marquis was to write in his diary concerning this meeting: "She maintained the aspect of a queen and saint, so great, sweet, and serene was her dignity. She pressed my hand in her two hands, saying, 'What a dolorous moment!'"

On the train from Turin to Monza, Clotilde wept and prayed. Her two other brothers had died with the comforts of the Church. Her father had had the same grace. Even her husband. Her brother's tolerance and generosity had won him the nickname *Humbert the Good*. But even a good king has reason to fear that before God he must be found wanting in many things. There had been two other attempts on the King's life. Perhaps these had been warnings for her brother—that he was walking on the edges of eternity.

When she reached the royal villa in Monza, she found her sister-in-law, Queen Margherita, prostrate in grief. Clotilde's nephew, Crown Prince Victor Emmanuel III, now thirty-one years old, was also there, overcome with sorrow at his father's death and frightened by the burden of the crown which was now his. Little did he dream then of the tragic sorrows which would plague his own life—two world wars, his humiliation by Mussolini, his abdication, the end of a reigning House of Savoy, his death in exile in Egypt. Victor Emmanuel's wife, Princess Elena of Montenegro, was trying to comfort her husband and the court in the gloom of mourning which had descended on the villa. But when Clotilde arrived, her presence became a lever to their spirits as she indicated by her radiant serenity that Christian sorrow leaves room for peace and hope, even for joy.

After the funeral services in Monza, Clotilde returned to Moncalieri. She did not go to Rome for the burial of her brother's body in the Pantheon. Her brother would understand now, even if he never did before, why she could not make herself go to Rome.

At Moncalieri Clotilde soon secured the services of another priest in order to have two Masses daily in her chapel—so that the infinite merits of the Holy Sacrifice of Calvary might fill up whatever was lacking in her brother at the moment of his untimely death. . . .

In answer to a letter of sympathy from Countess Clementine de Briançon, Clotilde wrote:

My sorrow is profound but it is filled with confidence in the mercy and goodness of our Lord.

All the prayers which have been said and which will be said for the repose of this soul, which is so dear to me, are for me a great consolation. . . . From one point of view the days I spent at Monza were very sad; from another point of view, they were very consoling because of the family reunion and the graces of our Lord.

The ex-Queen Margherita came often to visit Clotilde at Moncalieri. Even in her mourning, Margherita was regal from the top of her golden hair piled high on her head to the train trailing below her skirt. She found comfort in just being near her sister-in-law as they discussed the expiatory chapel which was to be built at Monza, on the site where King Humbert had been assassinated. They both knew that although God's Will cannot always be understood, it can always be accepted—and adored. . . .

Then, one morning, late in August, 1903, Clotilde received an urgent message from Paris. Would she come as quickly as possible to Rue de Berry? Clotilde went as soon as she could get ready.

On being admitted to the apartment on Rue de Berry, the first thing she asked of the elderly servant was, "How is Princess Matilde?"

The apartment was modest, having nothing in it of the splendors of the salons in the mansion on Rue de Courcelles. The last time she had seen Princess Matilde had been in Rome twelve years before, at the funeral of Prince Napoleon.

Clotilde went directly to Matilde's bedroom. Before she could say anything to the critically ill woman in bed, Matilde looked up and smiled, saying, "Oh, you have come. Thank you."

Clotilde realized that Matilde had not long to live. Would she consent to receive the Last Sacraments? It was so many years since she had been to confession, to Holy Communion, so many years that she herself probably did not remember the last time.

To Clotilde's surprise, Princess Matilde herself wanted to hear and to speak of death, of the Last Sacraments. Would Clotilde find a priest for her, someone who could help her, who would be patient with one who was helpless, confused? Helpless, confused. Where was the Princess Matilde who was one of the few women in Paris who had been considered the intellectual equal of men? Helpless, confused, she had said of herself.

"Don't worry, Matilde. His infinite mercy can reach to the depths of our helplessness, our confusion. All He asks of you now is trust in His love for you. His mercy is infinitely greater than any man's sins, greater than all men's sins."

When the ex-Empress arrived at Rue de Berry, Matilde was no longer able to speak but she recognized the Eugénie Montijo whom she once could not abide, and smiled. All their earlier enmity was gone. The edifice of that dislike

had been built on the sands of vanity and jealousy but now that the waters of humiliation and humility had washed the sands away, the edifice had toppled.

The ex-Empress and Princess Clotilde watched and prayed until Matilde closed her eyes in death. They both stayed on for the funeral; then the ex-Empress continued her life of traveling in order to escape from the ghosts of a haunted past, and Clotilde returned to Moncalieri to continue her life of fulfillment because it was filled with God. . . .

The last tragic sorrow for Clotilde came in 1908, in the assassinations of King Carlos of Portugal and of the Crown Prince, Luis Filipe. It all happened on the afternoon of Saturday, February 1, 1908. King Carlos, his Queen, their two sons, and the Queen Mother, Maria Pia, were returning in a ferry boat to Lisbon. On leaving the boat the royal family was met by the members of the cabinet and other court dignitaries; but King Carlos seems to have had a presentiment of what was coming, for he asked his Prime Minister, João Franco, if it were safe for him and his family to ride through the streets of Lisbon. Franco, whose dictatorial policies had turned the people against the government, spoke so confidently that the King took no precautions and with his family entered the two-horse open carriage that was to drive them to Necessidades Palace. Crowds lined the streets as the royal carriage passed. When the carriage was about to turn the corner of the Praça do Commercio, a young man jumped on to the back of the carriage and fired a revolver, the bullet hitting King Carlos in the left side of the neck. The Queen vainly tried to prevent the assassin from firing a second time by striking him in the face with the bouquet of flowers which had been presented to her only a few minutes before. The assassin

succeeded in pulling the trigger a second time, mortally wounding the King. A tall, black-bearded man then sprang toward the royal carriage and fired at the Crown Prince. Maria Pia heroically interposed herself to save her grandson but he had already fallen mortally wounded, having been struck by two bullets, one in the face and the other in the breast. Both assassins were themselves killed by police bullets, and the younger Prince Manuel was slightly wounded by one of the many shots that were fired during the confusion.

The day on which the news of the assassinations reached Clotilde, she had a scheduled visitor who, upon hearing the news from the valet who let him in, said that it might be better if he would return at some other time to see the Princess. But the valet assured him that Clotilde would receive him. In fact, Clotilde appeared even before the valet could go to summon her. On seeing her visitor, she said, "Have you heard the terrible things that have happened in Lisbon?" Then referring to the assassins, she added, "Let us pray for those poor unfortunates who, misled by false doctrines, thought they were doing good. Let us pray for them."

Maria Pia was never the same after the assassinations of her son and grandson. For days she went about the palace as if in a nightmare. Clotilde longed to comfort her sister but her own advancing years and the distance between Moncalieri and Lisbon precluded her going to Portugal. It was only sometime later, when revolutionary forces drove King Manuel from the throne, that Maria Pia came to Italy to live, in the Castle of Stupinigi, which King Victor Emmanuel III had offered her as a refuge.

From Moncalieri, Clotilde visited Maria Pia in Stupinigi, but more often the ex-Queen came to visit her sister in Moncalieri. Especially during the warmer seasons, the three

of them—the ex-Queen Margherita, the ex-Queen Maria Pia, and Princess Clotilde—dressed in widows' weeds, sat in the park of the castle at Moncalieri, serenely talking of bygone days but always carefully avoiding those events and persons whose recall would reopen wounds which would never completely heal because the heart can never totally forget. One day the three royal ladies called a photographer to have pictures taken of them together: the white-haired princess wearing her usual black dress and toque and the two stately ex-queens with their beautiful hair piled high on their heads.

THE LAST DECADE

If the last decade of Clotilde's life had its sorrows, it also had some joys, for the simple reason that, ordinarily speaking, sorrow and joy are the warp and woof of the texture of life. In 1904, Clotilde had the happiness of attending the eighth centennial of the discovery of the image of the Virgin of Consolation; in 1908, the personal message she received from Pope Pius X, now Saint Pius X, was an unforgettable benediction; and in 1910, the year before her death, her son Victor was married.

On June 20, 1104, the image of the Virgin of Consolation was discovered among some ruins in Turin by excavators working under the direction of a blind man to whom the Blessed Virgin had appeared and given the precise location where the ancient picture lay buried. On its discovery, the blind man recovered his sight, and from that day forward the Virgin of Consolation became one of the most renowned shrines in Piedmont. All the sovereigns of the House of Savoy—from the medieval Amadeus VI, popularly known as the Green Count, to the last of the reigning sovereigns, Humbert II, now in exile in Portugal—went to the beautiful baroque church of the Virgin of Consolation in Turin to

pay their homage to the venerable picture and to pray to the Mother of God, always leaving behind rich offerings of their faith and trust.

During the centennial celebrations of 1904, thousands of pilgrims visited the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation, among them Princess Clotilde and Maria Letizia who presented a star of diamonds to be used for a new crown to be placed on the head of the image of the Virgin. Clotilde knelt for hours before the main altar, above which hung the image that had been the most precious object of her lifelong devotion to the Mother of God. Here she had come in her earliest years, with her mother and grandmother. Here she had come on the day before her wedding. And here—long, long before her—had come sovereigns and popes and saints: the famous Amadeus VIII, who was a great sovereign but who allowed himself to be crowned as the anti-pope Felix V during the aberrations of the Western Schism; Pope Martin in 1418, after the Council of Constance had put an end to the Schism; saints like Charles Borromeo, Francis de Sales, Francis Borgia, Aloysius Gonzaga, Jane Frances de Chantal, and Benedict Joseph Labre.

After a few days at Turin, most of which she spent in prayer at the sanctuary, Clotilde returned to Moncalieri, her heart re-echoing Simeon's *nunc dimittis*, for she knew that for her there would never be another Marian centennial.

Something else which brought Clotilde as much happiness, perhaps, as the centennial was the personal message she received from Pope Pius X, who had succeeded Pope Leo XIII in 1903. In a personal audience which her chaplain, Canon Paolo Brusa, had with Pius X in 1908, the Pope said regarding Clotilde, "Tell her that I send her my benediction and that I recommend myself to her prayers because I have great confidence in them." Then he said to the

Canon, "She continues the series of the saints of the House of Savoy."

Lastly, six months before she died, Clotilde had the consolation of seeing her son Victor married to Princess Clementine, the youngest daughter of Leopold II, the King of Belgium. Clotilde had been deeply concerned about Victor as she knew of his liaison with an actress named Marie Biot, who occupied a house adjoining his on Avenue Louise in Brussels. Victor was now forty-eight years of age, and Clotilde hoped that his marriage to the Belgian princess, who was almost forty, would also be good for his soul.

King Leopold had opposed the marriage as he did not want to incur the displeasure of the Third Republic by allying his daughter with the claimant to the throne of France. But after the death of the Belgian King in 1909, negotiations for the marriage were completed.

The nuptials took place on November 14, 1910, in the chapel of the Castle of Moncalieri. Bishop Masera of Biella, Clotilde's former chaplain, performed the ceremony assisted by members of the palatine clergy and canons from Santa Maria della Scala. For the occasion Clotilde put aside again—for the last time—her customary black. She was a picture of quiet dignity in her gray satin and with her snow-white hair parted in the middle, drawn back above her ears, and fashioned into a chignon at the back of her head. This was the coiffure she had worn all her life, with the exception of the few months in Paris at the beginning of her married life when she consented to have her hair styled in the dangling curls of the Second Empire. But even in Paris—during the epoch when the English designer Charles Frederick Worth was in vogue—Clotilde had never been engrossed with the things of fashion. On one occasion she had held up the index fingers of her two hands, then pushed them far apart, saying, "Fashion and I are like this."

For the occasion of the nuptial banquet and reception at the Castle of Moncalieri, the salons were banked with white and yellow chrysanthemums. Members of the two royal families mingled with civic dignitaries and scores of dukes and duchesses, marquesses and marchionesses, counts and countesses, from Italy, France, Belgium, and other countries. Clotilde walked quietly among her guests, greeting every one, some of whom she had not seen for years, others whom she had never met before. To each of the priests present she gave a breviary in four volumes.

There was only one invited guest who was not there and whom Clotilde missed very, very much and that was her other son, Louis. He was now governor of the Caucasus and too far away or too busy to attend his brother's wedding. At one time Clotilde had thought that Louis would marry, for he had been deeply infatuated with the Grand Duchess Helena of Russia. But when she refused to marry him, he became a confirmed bachelor.

That evening, after all the guests had departed, Clotilde took off her gray silk, folded it carefully, and put it away—forever.

Less than three months later, on Monday, February 6, 1911, Clotilde was seized with fever and violent pains in her chest. When Doctor Andrea Mossa, who had been the court physician for thirty years, examined her, he diagnosed the illness as pneumonia. Two Sisters of Providence, members of a religious congregation who had settled in Moncalieri after being expelled from France in 1880, were assigned to take care of Clotilde.

On Friday afternoon, February 10, Clotilde had an attack of spasmodic pain during which Doctor Mossa gave her an injection of morphine. After a little while, aware that her pain had subsided, Clotilde asked one of the sister-

nurses what the injection had been. On being told that it was morphine, she said, "You have taken me for a person of the world." She made it clear that she wanted no more injections to deaden pain.

A day or two later Clotilde felt so ill that she asked Doctor Mossa to tell her the truth about her physical condition. In answer the doctor said, "Your Highness has pneumonia in the right lobe but there is nothing to be alarmed about."

Notwithstanding the doctor's reassurance, Clotilde said to one of the sister-nurses, "Sister, if one of your own Sisters were in my condition, what would you do?"

Without hesitation the Sister answered, "I would think it wise to have her receive the Last Sacraments."

"Then, why don't you advise me to do the same?"

On Sunday afternoon, February 12, the Last Sacraments were administered to Clotilde by her chaplain, Canon Brusa. After he had finished, Clotilde smiled and said to him in Piedmontese, "You have done everything well. Thank you." She also thanked Canon Gallo, her other chaplain, who had been present for the anointing. But on becoming aware that there were two sister-nurses taking care of her, she exclaimed, "This is a luxury, this is a luxury; it is too much."

When it became known in Turin that Princess Clotilde was critically ill, a public triduum was made on February 12, 13, and 14, in the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud. Hundreds of Turinese attended, begging God to spare "the Saint of Moncalieri."

But if within the depths of her soul Clotilde could already hear "Time's winged chariot hurrying near," eternity was still some time away for her. The fever subsided, the pains disappeared, and she felt decidedly better. On being told that the crisis of her illness had passed, she said, "I do not refuse to continue to live if it be God's Will. I submit myself completely to what God wills." Then she added,

"If it weren't for these poor people here. I know I am not necessary, but who would take care of them?" In her submission it seemed as if it were harder to resign herself to live than to die.

When Doctor Mossa ordered injections of iron extract for her, Clotilde would not consent until both the doctor and the sister-nurses told her that the injections were urgently needed. While one of the Sisters was giving her the first injection, Clotilde asked, "Sister, would you give these injections to one of your own Sisters?" The Sister having answered in the affirmative, Clotilde continued, "All right, then; but please know well that I do not want to be cared for as a princess but as a religious."

With the coming of spring, Clotilde seemed to improve. She was still very weak and unable to walk without assistance, but Maria Letizia and the others in the castle were confident that the summer would bring complete recovery. Frequently during May and early June, Clotilde was placed in a small carriage and taken for a ride in the castle park. The sister-nurses took her to chapel for daily Mass and for an occasional visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Her confessor, Padre Benedetto Fraccalvieri, the rector of the College of Charles Albert, came to the castle every Friday morning to hear her confession and to give her spiritual direction.

On warmer days Clotilde would sit for a while on a chair placed on the balcony outside her room. If the day was clear, she could see the whole city of Turin in the distance. This was the year of the Exposition, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the unification of Italy. The Turinese were preparing the pavilions, the booths, the exhibits, through which would walk thousands of visitors while bands played and the red, white, and green flags waved in the summer breeze. Clotilde knew that she would not be there but she could image them all—the men in their peg-top pants,

flashily striped silk shirts and striped socks, and their Panama hats; the women in their high-waisted, long-sleeved, trailing dresses, and their large hats with tall, white aigrettes which bobbed up and down during animated conversations. Yes, Maria Letizia would go to the festivities in Turin during the summer, and some of the tenants would go, but not she nor Maria Pia. Maria Pia too was ill, very ill, at the Castle of Stupinigi, and Clotilde wondered whether she or her younger sister would be the first to die. . . .

One night in mid-June, 1911, Clotilde awakened with an excruciating pain in her head and her pillow soaked with blood from a hemorrhage in the back of her neck. Not wanting to disturb anyone, she arose quietly and did the best she could to clean the blood and pus which were still oozing.

For the last few years the townspeople had noticed that Princess Clotilde was walking with her head and neck slightly bent down and that she had a slight curvature of the spine. But they had attributed the condition to her advancing years, never thinking that it was the result of a cervical ankylosis. Clotilde herself had not been concerned, even when she became aware of a painful swelling at the back of her neck.

The morning after the hemorrhage, Clotilde sent for Doctor Mossa, who diagnosed the sore as a carcinoma, which he proceeded to lance so as to give her some relief from the severe headache she was having. While he was performing the surgery, Clotilde's face paled but she never made the slightest lament.

From then on followed days of intense pain and discomfort for Clotilde; but she refused to take any narcotics, saying, "It is supportable. It is supportable." She insisted that she wanted no exceptional or expensive medicines—only those which were usual, common, and available to the

poor. When her daughter suggested getting a celebrated doctor, Professor Pescarolo, Clotilde said, "I have confidence in Doctor Mossa."

Maria Letizia, however, went ahead with her arrangements to have Doctor Pescarolo visit her mother. Doctor Pescarolo confirmed Doctor Mossa's diagnosis—that Clotilde had an advanced carcinoma, for which probably nothing could be done. He said to Maria Letizia, "Never, never in all my hospital work have I encountered a cancerous sore of this kind." Doctor Pescarolo, a Jew who several years later became a Catholic, spoke with admiration of Clotilde's patience and calmness, perceiving that such fortitude was an effect of her faith.

While those around her were thinking of ways and means to cure her, Clotilde seemed unconcerned, although she submitted to whatever was suggested to her. At that time many people were praying to Don Bosco, now Saint John Bosco, in the hope of obtaining the miracles necessary for his beatification. When Countess Irene d'Agliano suggested to Clotilde that they make a novena to Don Bosco for her recovery, Clotilde agreed. The novena consisted of one Gloria Patri and this petition said by Clotilde, "My God, if it be Your Will and for Your greater glory, please cure me through the intercession of Your servant Don Bosco."

Meanwhile Clotilde tried her best to follow Doctor Mossa's direction that she eat a few small pieces of bread from time to time. Since she had trouble in digesting the ordinary bread, the sister-nurses substituted *i grissini*, thin sticks of a very light bread. Clotilde protested, "But this is a luxury. A little citrate in water would be simpler to give me for my indigestion."

On the last day of the novena to Don Bosco, Clotilde's condition suddenly became worse, and from that day forward she could no longer leave her bed. She was hardly

able to move and could speak only with difficulty, and a little liquid was all she could take for nourishment. The Sisters thought a little white wine might help her but they had to procure some from their own convent because Clotilde had none in her possession.

Although Clotilde's face began to mirror the torturing pains in her head, she did her best to smile whenever anyone asked her how she was. As her condition worsened, her two sons, the royal family, and Bishop Masera were summoned. Meanwhile in Turin, a triduum was being made for her, in preparation for the Feast of the Virgin of Consolation on June 20. On the day of the feast Bishop Masera arrived in Moncalieri, said Mass in Clotilde's room, and gave her Holy Communion.

Before the Bishop began the Mass, Clotilde said to the sister-nurses, "My good Sisters, please tell me, in all truth, how much longer I may live, and tell me frankly what you think of my condition."

"Your Highness, your condition is grave but we hope to have the joy of having you with us for a few more days."

"Thank you, Sisters. I want to prepare myself for this Holy Communion as if it were to be my last. I ask pardon of all whom I have harmed in any way or to whom I have caused any pain."

When she turned to Padre Fraccalvieri and asked if he thought her death was near, he counseled her to leave the hour and the moment in God's hands. A profound calm enveloped her as she said, "How happy I am to die. I never would have believed that I could be so calm, so tranquil in the face of death."

To those in the room she said, "I am grateful for all you have done for me. When I shall be in paradise, I will repay you all."

Later that day the monsignor-secretary to Cardinal

Richelmy arrived to convey the Cardinal's personal benediction. Clotilde lowered her head when the Monsignor raised his hand in benediction over her, both in his own name and in the name of the Cardinal. Not long after, Clotilde was told that Père Cormier had sent his blessing and that another triduum for her was about to begin at the Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud.

On the next day, June 21, Clotilde was visibly moved when her sons arrived. The first to arrive was Louis, whom she had not seen for a long, long time. Then came Victor with his wife, Princess Clementine. She pressed the hand of each one.

On June 22, Maria Pia and ex-Queen Margherita arrived. Clotilde's emotion at seeing them was so great that the doctor and the nurses were afraid of the effect it might have on Clotilde's heart. When Maria Pia bent over to kiss her, Clotilde made a supreme effort to speak but was unable to articulate any intelligible words. Clotilde looked at her sister with a look of affection and solicitude, as if she wanted to say, "You should not have come." Clotilde's solicitude for her sister was well founded, for Maria Pia died on July 5, at the Castle of Stupinigi, exactly ten days after Clotilde's death.

On that same day, June 22, Clotilde received Holy Communion again although with difficulty since she was having frequent spells of coughing and vomiting. This was to be her last Holy Communion.

During her illness Clotilde had said a number of times that she hoped she would die on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and those around her hoped that she would get her wish. The next day would be the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

When Friday, June 23, dawned, Clotilde was in a semi-coma, seemingly unable to move or speak. Hence everyone was startled when she suddenly said in a loud voice and

with perfect articulation, "At three, at three!" These were to be her last words.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, Clotilde's eyes became luminous as she fixed them on high; and her arms, which for eight days had been immovable, were raised toward heaven in a transport of joy. She repeated this gesture three times and each time with such extraordinary force that Maria Letizia ran to her mother's side through fear of what might happen. But Clotilde did not die on that day.

Whether Clotilde herself thought that she would die because she had so ardently desired to die on the Feast of the Sacred Heart or whether her words and gestures were only the expression of a devotion which she had practiced for years, namely, that of recalling and meditating on the Passion of Christ every Friday afternoon at three, no one will ever know. But if Clotilde had been able to speak, she probably would have been the first one to say that she wanted only God's Will and that special signs and manifestations were not in her way of spirituality.

On Saturday, June 24, Clotilde was still living, sometimes in a semicoma and sometimes in seeming awareness of what was going on. In her moments of awareness, she made signs to those around her to pray for her because she knew that all our justice is blemished in God's sight.

It was during one of these periods of awareness that Bishop Masera told Clotilde of the telegram which had just arrived from Pope Pius X. At the mention of the words *Santo Padre*, Clotilde opened wide her eyes. The Bishop told her that the Holy Father had sent her the apostolic benediction and the plenary indulgence *in articulo mortis*. When the Bishop asked if she understood, Clotilde nodded her head. The Church and the Holy Father—they had been the one passion of her life.

Early on Sunday morning, June 25, Clotilde's pulse be-

came very irregular and Doctor Mossa said that she would probably die that day. Knowing Clotilde's wish to be anointed again, the sister-nurses informed Canon Brusa of the doctor's prediction. During the anointing, as if by some hidden power, Clotilde regained awareness of what was going on, and a look of great peace spread over her pain-anguished features. Canon Brusa had hardly finished the prayers when Clotilde went into her death agony.

During the afternoon, prayers for the agonizing were said again and again, and Bishop Masera several times read aloud Christ's prayer after the Last Supper, as recorded in the Gospel of Saint John. At five o'clock a slight death rattle began. One of the sister-nurses said to ex-Queen Margherita, "It is the end, at most a half-hour." In silence those in the room surrounded the simple, iron bed on which Princess Clotilde was dying. Maria Letizia kept pressing her mother's hand while the others were praying aloud.

The afternoon rosary and Benediction—services which Clotilde had attended every day of her life at Moncalieri—were just ending in Santa Maria della Scala; and Bishop Masera was again pronouncing the words of absolution. As he pronounced the last word, Clotilde bowed her head as if to say, "Amen."

A few minutes later the church bell of Santa Maria della Scala began to toll, and all the townspeople knew that "the Saint of Moncalieri" had died. Everywhere in Moncalieri everyone was repeating, "*È morta la santa*—The saint is dead."

It was five forty-five the afternoon of Sunday, June 25, 1911, two days after the Feast of the Sacred Heart. Clotilde had wanted to die on the feast, and in a very real sense she had had her wish; for in Moncalieri, as in other parts of Italy, the Feast of the Sacred Heart was solemnized on the following Sunday.

Present in the room when Princess Clotilde died were ex-Queen Margherita, ex-Queen Maria Pia, her two sons, her grandson, Princess Clementine, Bishop Masera, the sister-nurses, Doctor Mossa, and Padre Fraccalvieri. Canon Brusa and Canon Gallo, together with the Countess Irene d'Agliano and some other intimate friends, were praying in the chapel.

Clotilde had left specific direction for her body after her death—it was not to be touched until three hours had passed. Moreover, in her last will and testament, which she had made in 1907, she had written concerning herself:

I ask the executor of my will to set aside two thousand *lire* [in those days equivalent to at least four hundred dollars] and to have said as soon as possible one thousand Masses for the repose of my soul.

I desire soon after my death to be dressed in the white habit of the Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, to which I have had the grace of belonging for over thirty-five years.

I desire and ask that my burial be as simple as possible. I do not want any flowers or wreaths. If any are sent, they are to be put aside and then distributed to the churches of Moncalieri.

But Clotilde was not dressed in the white habit of Saint Dominic; neither was her funeral as simple as possible. Maria Letizia insisted that her mother be dressed in her customary black and that a small white Dominican scapular placed under the dress would be sufficient. And the royal family, while agreeing to keep arrangements as simple as possible, gave the Princess a royal funeral.

The town of Moncalieri observed a public day of mourning. All shops, offices, and places of business were closed, many of them having been draped in black and displaying signs reading, "Closed because of the death of Her Royal

and Imperial Highness, Princess Clotilde." In her room at the castle there was a stream of distinguished visitors filing past the walnut and bronze casket in which the dead Princess lay, and in the chapel Masses were celebrated continually until noon on Monday and Tuesday, June 26 and 27.

On the morning of June 28, Bishop Masera, assisted by the canons of Santa Maria della Scala, sang the solemn Mass of requiem, which was attended by the Italian royalty, including King Victor Emmanuel III and Queen Elena. At two o'clock in the afternoon the casket was placed in the foyer of the castle so that the hundreds of townspeople who had not yet paid their respects could file past. For about an hour there was a stream of men, women, and children, many of whom touched the body of "the Saint of Moncalieri" with their rosaries and other religious objects.

When the body was ready to be taken to Turin, a throng waited outside the castle gates. Leading the procession from the castle were the municipal guards and a troop of royal *carabinieri* in their colorful uniforms and plumed hats. Then came the flag of the commune, the mayor of Moncalieri, other civil authorities, the Barnabite Fathers and students from the College of Charles Albert, and representatives from numerous civic, military, and religious societies of the district, each group with its respective flag.

At the limits of the town the procession of people stopped, separated into two rows, and stood at attention as the *carabinieri* on horseback and the procession of carriages proceeded to Turin. In the first carriage following the hearse were Clotilde's two sons and her grandson; in the second, two gentlemen of the court; in the third, Bishop Masera, Canon Brusa, and Canon Gallo. In the other carriages were relatives, Sisters of Providence, civil authorities, and members of the Piedmontese nobility. At the end came two

more groups on horseback, one of cavalrymen and the other of *bersaglieri*, or infantrymen. Crowds lined the roads as the procession went past. Many of the *contadini* from the farms along the route came dressed in their Sunday best to watch the procession, the children being placed in the front rows so that they could see the horses and the plumed horsemen with their gleaming scabbards.

The day was warm and sunny and the hoofs of the black-caparisoned horses raised white dust as the carriages continued at a jogging pace. And occasionally along the way could be heard the tolling of the bells.

By the time the funeral procession reached Turin the day had become suffocatingly hot, for the city lies low and is hemmed in by the encircling Alps. But several thousand people had already gathered in the piazza in front of the Church of the Gran Madre di Dio and in the adjoining Piazza of Victor Emmanuel; and hundreds of others were leaning out of windows and balconies. Some in the piazzas tried to break through the police cordons when they saw the hearse approaching, and had to be held back by the large squadron of *carabinieri* on duty.

The casket was placed on a catafalque at the foot of the steps of the Church of the Gran Madre di Dio. This beautiful church modeled on the Pantheon in Rome and interiorly displaying a simplified baroque, was built by Victor Emmanuel I in thanksgiving for the end of his exile in Sardinia and for the restoration of Turin to Savoy in 1814. It was a church which Clotilde had visited many times during her childhood, usually with her mother, who had explained to her that the large marble statues on the side altars depicted two Blesseds of the House of Savoy—Blessed Amadeus and Blessed Margaret.

Waiting to meet the casket bearing Clotilde's body was Cardinal Richelmy, surrounded by the metropolitan chap-

ter and by the canons of the churches of San Lorenzo and Corpus Christi. The Schola Cantorum of the Salesians of Don Bosco sang the obsequies, and the Cardinal imparted the absolution and blessed the body. At that selfsame moment, almost as if their coincidental coming were a part of the prescribed ritual, a flock of white doves circled low over the casket, then rose and flew away.

Behind the Cardinal, and standing on the lower steps of the church, were King Victor Emmanuel III, Queen Elena, ex-Queen Margherita, Maria Letizia, Victor, Louis, Princess Clementine, and the others who were to accompany the body to Superga. The ex-Queen Maria Pia, whose own death was only a week away, was critically ill at the Castle of Stupinigi.

The services finished, the funeral cortege proceeded to Superga where they arrived at six o'clock that evening. The sun was just setting behind the distant Alps and all was quiet except for the muffled weeping of someone here and there in the crowd which had been waiting in front of the basilica. Monsignor Francesco Brielli, prefect of the basilica, conducted the services in the church, after which the body was taken down into the crypt for entombment.

Clotilde's tomb is immediately above that of her husband, made of the same black marble and inscribed with the same gold letters. But unlike the inscriptions on any of the other tombs in the basilica, the epitaph on Clotilde's tomb states that she died after a life of great "dignity and sanctity."

From the day of the burial, crowds went to venerate Clotilde's tomb in spite of certain restrictions imposed by the royal family. There were a number of organized pilgrimages, among them being a group of Dominican tertiaries and a Catholic Action group. In Turin a street and an academy for girls were named in her honor. The name of Princess Clotilde of Savoy was fast becoming a legend.

By royal decree the room in which Clotilde died was to be kept as it was on the day of her death. During World War II, when the castle was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers, her room was temporarily converted into a chapel. But today it is again as it was when Clotilde lived and died in it. And her tomb is still an object of veneration and pilgrimage, even though the Basilica of Superga is not easily accessible.

In Moncalieri the townspeople regard Princess Clotilde as "their saint." They pray to her for favors because they feel in their hearts that she can and will help them as she did when she lived and walked among them. In their words, "If Princess Clotilde is not a saint, then we don't know who can be a saint." On the occasion of a visit to Moncalieri, Monsignor Achille Ratti, later Pope Pius XI, said to the townspeople, "You have a treasure which is worth more than anything else you could desire—Princess Clotilde."

Soon after her death the people of Moncalieri erected a bronze monument to Princess Clotilde in the Church of Santa Maria della Scala, on the very spot where she used to kneel for hours in prayer. In 1915 this bronze monument was replaced by a life-sized marble statue depicting Clotilde in her customary attitude of prayer—with her eyes closed and her head slightly bent down, her elbows propped on the *prie-dieu*, and her face resting on her joined hands. The memorial, bearing the simple inscription GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE TOWN, was dedicated on April 27, 1915, in the presence of Princess Maria Letizia, Prince Louis, Count Humbert of Salemi, the dukes of Savoy, members of the Piedmontese nobility, and hundreds of people from Moncalieri and Turin. Cardinal Richelmy blessed the statue and delivered a eulogy on the great virtues of Princess Clotilde.

Today the people of Moncalieri are not only energetic in

promoting the cause of the beatification of "their saint." They have also requested the transference of Clotilde's body from the Basilica of Superga to the Church of Santa Maria della Scala, where they feel that it rightfully belongs.

In a short time the fame of Clotilde's holiness spread throughout Italy and beyond. Hundreds of people, including bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and superior generals of various religious orders, began to petition the Archbishop of Turin to initiate the informative process on the life and virtues of Princess Clotilde as a preliminary to introducing the cause for her beatification. But no one was more active in this preliminary step than the Master General and the Postulator General of the Dominican Order, since Princess Clotilde had been a faithful Dominican tertiary for over forty years.

The informative process lasted three years, from April, 1936, to May, 1939. During this time almost eighteen hundred printed pages of information and sworn testimony were assembled. The next year, on February 27, 1940, Clotilde's writings (which include over two thousand pages of letters, her diary, her prayers, and her copious spiritual notes) were approved. And on July 10, 1942, Pope Pius XII officially approved the Introduction to the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Maria Clotilde of Savoy-Napoleon.

The process of beatifying a Christian is usually long and arduous because the process of becoming a saint is usually not short and never easy. Clotilde's life, especially the forty years between her departure from Paris in 1870 and her death at Moncalieri in 1911, was no ordinary life. But the process for her beatification will continue only if the study of her spiritual character by those appointed by the Sacred Congregation of Rites reveals that her extraordinary spiritual life was also heroic.

THE WAY OF PRINCESS CLOTILDE

At the end of her retreat on December 8, 1891, Clotilde made the resolution "to love God, to love my neighbor, and to die to myself in a life which is simple and ordinary."

This resolution may be said to epitomize Clotilde's spiritual method. In her way of spirituality there were no ecstasies, no visions, no prophecies—nothing which could be considered charismatic. In a letter written to Padre Bianchi on November 23, 1878, she referred to experiencing a kind of intuitive understanding of what God was asking of particular persons of her acquaintance. Even this, however, could be considered in the normal order of Christian perfection. The awareness of how someone else feels, of what he needs, of what would be best for him spiritually—these are things which can come connaturally to one who loves another as oneself for the love of God.

But while Clotilde's spiritual method was ordinary enough, Clotilde was no ordinary person because she brought to the ordinary an extraordinary dedication of purpose and energy. She once said in Paris, "For me there can never be a middle course: it will be either all good or all

evil." And once she had chosen God as the end of her personal destiny—a choice which she had made as far back as she could remember—she kept her aim as straight as a sword. Writing to Padre Bianchi in 1876, she said: "I have always wanted Him and placed Him before everything else; always I have loved and served Him."

Coupled with this extraordinary singleness of purpose was a stern sense of duty. "It is my duty. Duty must come before everything else. I always try to do my duty. In conscience I cannot do otherwise." These and similar expressions were a recurring theme in her conversations and letters.

Sometimes the words *conscience* and *duty* fell with the monotony of a hammer's beat, posing a question for her future biographers. Was this defense of her conduct a sign of weakness or of strength? An answer can be attempted only if the question is viewed in perspective. From her earliest years, Clotilde was taught to regard conscience and duty as the two things she must never let go, no matter what else had to be sacrificed. Finding herself frequently in situations which directly or indirectly challenged her conscience and her sense of duty, she had no choice but to act as she did. Anything else would have been a betrayal of her own deepest convictions. Clotilde was a very direct and simple person. She did not have, for example, the subtlety of a Saint Thomas More who could disarm his opponents without seeming to oppose them—merely by flipping off one of his witticisms. Hence, Clotilde's reaction was always direct and simple, "I do this or I don't do that because of my conscience." Any form of subterfuge would have been alien to her temperament.

Viewed in perspective, then, the hammer's beat is transmuted into the refrain of a poem, and her whole life is seen as an ode to duty. However difficult, the duty of each moment was a call to love. With the poet she could say:

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:

It is, in fact, in her emphasis on conscience and duty that Clotilde has something to say to our generation, who tend to consider these words old-fashioned, almost archaic. Instead of conscience and duty, modern man emphasizes freedom and pleasure, as if conscientiousness cannot be free and the performance of duty cannot be pleasurable or, vice versa, as if freedom cannot be conscientious and pleasure must necessarily exclude the idea of duty. In his fascination with the expanding frontiers of knowledge and action, modern man tends to forget that every man's conscience is still his own and that the performance of his duties is still his primary responsibility.

From Clotilde's singleness of purpose and stern sense of duty flowed all the qualities which are associated with her spiritual character: prudence, self-discipline, decisiveness, simplicity, order, serenity, fortitude. There was never anything casual or haphazard in Clotilde: everything was always under control, thought and prayed over, planned for, to the smallest detail. Her attention to details was manifested in her diary, her letters, her prayers, her last will and testament. In willing her personal goods, for example, she did not forget even an *Agnus Dei*. It was one of the many minutely described bequests in her last will and testament: "I beg the Holy Father to accept the *Agnus Dei* given to me at my baptism by Queen Maria Christina, widow of King Charles Felix."

The paradox is that she maintained an extraordinary simplicity and liberty of spirit in this rigid adherence to duty in the maze of minutiae and of opposites in which her life was enmeshed. She opposed the House of Savoy in the Ro-

man Question but had an affectionate closeness with every member of her family; she was married but lived most of her married life apart from her husband; she had the tenderest affection for her two sons but rarely saw them; she was a woman living in the world but she bound herself not only by the three vows of religion but also by the vow of perfection; she was always occupied but seldom distracted; she was beset by trials but remained imperturbably calm.

Doubts and scruples found practically no place in the spiritual life of Princess Clotilde. At times she was concerned but she did not worry. She sought counsel or permission of her spiritual directors; but once she had made her decision, she proceeded without hesitation or fear. And once she acted, there was never any agonizing reappraisal of her action. There was only one decision which she later said she would reverse were she then making it, namely, the decision to be separated from her husband. But even on this occasion she was quick to add that her decision had been objective, saying, "I did not act through caprice." Staying with her husband would have meant greater suffering; and as she grew in holiness, she grew in her desire to share in the fellowship of Christ's Passion.

Clotilde, moreover, experienced little or nothing of the sense of guilt or self-torture which sometimes besets the lives of good Christians, even of saints. She always confronted herself in the depths of her own soul and emerged from that confrontation with the honest judgment that more than anything else she wanted to do God's Will and that this desire is the only thing which God demands of anyone. For Clotilde, everything else was His gift—including the grace to desire His Will.

There was a sense of order in everything which Clotilde did, and nowhere was this order more observable than in her devotions. She had devotion to many of the saints, the

poor souls in purgatory, her guardian angel, the rosary, the Holy Shroud, the Passion; but her three great devotions were to the Church, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Clotilde's girlhood devotion to the Church and, by extension, to the Holy Father grew deeper and stronger with the passing of years. It was the one loyalty which was not negotiable.

In her first letter to Pope Pius IX in 1872 she wrote: "Above everything else I am an Apostolic, Roman Catholic." In 1877 she wrote to Canon Gazelli: "All that the Pope does or says, I approve; all that he condemns and that is done against the Church and the Sovereign Pontiff, I disapprove." In another letter to the Canon, written during the pontificate of Leo XIII, she said: "The Holy Father may have spiritual children who are better than I, but I will not admit that he has any who are more devoted or more truly his."

She often wept over the conflict between the Church and the Italian State, between the Holy Father and her family; notwithstanding, she never wavered in her allegiance to the Church and the Holy Father. Writing to Canon Gazelli in 1864, she left no doubt as to where she stood: "When the Holy Father says a thing, it's enough for me. I love him, I respect him, I venerate him with all my heart. Moreover, I would willingly give my life in order to see everything resolved between him and my family."

Relative to the Roman Question, modern Catholics and even modern ecclesiastics may feel that so long as the Pope had temporal sovereignty, the vast lands of the original Papal States were more of an obstacle than a help to the spiritual mission of the Church. But this is hindsight; it is seeing the Roman Question in a set of modern circumstances.

In any event, Clotilde was not concerned with the Church

from any point of view other than that of faith. And her reasoning from this point of view is as valid today as it was in the nineteenth century. The Church is, as it were, Christ; and Christ is the Church, regardless of which analogy is used to signify their identity. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head and the faithful are the members; and the Head and members of the Mystical Body are in as intimate a relationship as the head and members of a human body. Or, in terms of other analogies, the Church is the vine and branches—Christ being the vine and the faithful the branches; the Church is the seamless robe of Christ, which cannot be divided. In this concept of the Church, the Pope is the Vicar of Christ and, in a sense, Christ Himself—"the sweet Christ on earth." The Pope is, therefore, the guardian of the extended life of Christ, which is the Church.

This identity of Christ, Church, and Pope was something to which Clotilde clung with strong faith and love. She almost always referred to the Church as "*la Santa Chiesa*" and to the Pope as "*il Santo Padre*." Whenever she wrote to the Pope, she did so on her knees; moreover, out of respect, she always made a rough draft of her letter, then carefully revised and copied it.

Clotilde maintained her position towards the Church and the Pope, especially in the Roman Question, even though she was aware that many others—including her own family, including priests and even prelates—did not agree with her. And it was precisely herein that her courage, like that of Saint Thomas More, shone like an only star in a black sky.

When she heard that there were priests who were critical of the dogma of papal infallibility, which had just been promulgated, she wrote from Switzerland to a trusted friend: "I recommend to your prayers the many priests who unfortunately are not in agreement on the matter of the Holy

Father and infallibility. I cannot express to you how much sorrow I experience because of this."

In 1873, before leaving London for Milan, where she was to live for six months, she wrote to Canon Gazelli to ask his advice on the choice of a spiritual director: "You understand that I would want a priest who is fully in accord with my ideas regarding the Holy Church and the Sovereign Pontiff. . . . For me the Church and the Sovereign Pontiff have precedence over anything else."

She saw with sorrow that some priests accepted with pleasure the honor of receiving the Cross of Cavalier from the Italian government. To her this seemed almost a compromise of that absolute loyalty which she felt priests should have for the Holy Father. Notwithstanding, she had great respect for priests and prelates, including those who leaned to liberalism. Neither in Italy nor in France would she ever permit a priest to kiss her hand as was customary in those days in greeting a princess at a royal or an imperial court.

In 1883, when Cardinal Alimonda arrived in Turin to take possession of his archbishopric, some university students protested his elevation by starting a turmoil in front of the Cathedral of San Giovanni as they awaited his exit. The chief of police advised the Cardinal to leave the cathedral secretly by way of the adjoining Royal Chapel of the Holy Shroud. As the Cardinal was ascending the steps leading to the chapel, he met Clotilde who on her knees begged forgiveness for the disrespect shown to his consecrated person.

Identical with her devotion to the Church but distinct from it was Clotilde's devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For her this was not just "another devotion." Psychologically and spiritually it satisfied a deep personal need, for her self-discipline and calmness belied the very sensitive and affectionate person that she really was. From her

earliest childhood she wanted to be loved but even more she wanted to love; and she found in the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus the perfect answer to this need of her temperament. As she once wrote to her sister-in-law, Sister Marie of the Cross: "I cannot express how much I love and comprehend this devotion. It seems made just for me because it is easy and simple, and also because my heart has need to love, to give itself, to find something which can keep it bound forever. In this devotion I find all—happiness, paradise on earth."

Love for Clotilde, however, was not just a matter of feeling; it was the source or basis of Christian perfection. As she wrote to Canon Gazelli: "I feel in the depths of my being that the Lord demands perfection of me: how beautiful it is to live through love, with love, and in love." For her, love and perfection were the two sides of the same coin: love effected perfection and perfection demonstrated love.

Clotilde's devotion to the Heart of Jesus dated from her fourteenth year, when she initiated the practice of observing the month of the Sacred Heart; but her devotion received a special orientation after she learned how "the month of the Sacred Heart" was observed in the Monastery des Oiseaux in Paris. What this devotion of "the month of the Sacred Heart" consisted in is best told in the words of her letter dated May 30, 1862, and written from Paris to her friend Countess Clementine de Briançon:

Here we are at the month of the Sacred Heart. Beginning the day after tomorrow, would you like to unite yourself to many other persons who during these days of grace unite in making reparation for all the offenses committed against the Heart of Jesus? A particular day is selected by each one and on that day priests celebrate Mass and lay persons receive Holy Communion in a spirit of adoration and love toward

the adorable Heart of Jesus. During the day a consecration to the Sacred Heart is made, as well as some form of amendment. Finally, each one prays for the Holy Church, for her needs and intentions, and for the whole world; in other words, each one tries, in so far as he can, to make reparation, to supplicate, to pray. . . .

Clotilde not only practiced the devotion herself; she conducted a real apostolate to secure others to do likewise, for she continued in her letter to the Countess:

Would you take the tenth of June for your day? I would also be happy if you would find some other good souls who would care to unite themselves to the others. The Sacred Heart will Himself repay you. One can select any day, provided it is between the first of June and the third of July inclusive. If you get any, just send me their names on a slip of paper, with the dates selected. Although I am suggesting this to you, my dear Clementine, I want you to speak of it as if it came exclusively from you. Don't mention me at all, I beg you. I have thought of the Marquise di Barolo; if she wishes, the seventeenth of June would be a good day.

The "month of the Sacred Heart" actually consisted of thirty-three days, to honor the thirty-three years of Christ's life. Clotilde had leaflets printed explaining the devotion and these she distributed and mailed out by the thousands. In the last May of her life, she still occupied herself with mailing out leaflets for the month of June. She became so identified with this devotion that she often referred to it as "my month." She entered the names of the participants in a carefully kept register, issuing a small certificate to each one as a reminder of the date. The participants kept increasing until, between the Italian and French, the number reached almost fourteen thousand. Most of the letters

which she wrote enclosed a Sacred Heart leaflet and certificate or mentioned the devotion. A great number of her letters to Père Cormier seem to have been written for the purpose of giving him his day for the month of the Sacred Heart.

Clotilde's own devotion to the Heart of Jesus, however, was not limited to the thirty-three days of June and the early part of July. It was a devotion that entered into her thinking, her words, her actions. In her letters she generally signed herself: Sister Catherine of the Sacred Heart, Dominican tertiary. Her acts of charity were done "in honor of the Sacred Heart." The Fridays of the year, particularly the first Friday of every month, were special days for her because of their association with the devotion to the Sacred Heart. She was delighted when something good occurred on a Friday, saddened if something which she considered offensive to the Sacred Heart occurred. When Renan's book *Les Apôtres* appeared in April, 1866, she wrote from Paris to a friend: "You have probably heard at Turin the sad news of a new book by that poor Monsieur Renan, which appeared last Friday here, having the title *Les Apôtres*. What an offense to the Heart of Jesus! I am pained the more since the book came out on a Friday. The dear Sacred Heart has already been offended so much. I will indeed try to make reparation. . . ."

She ardently desired to see the world consecrated to the Heart of Jesus. Pope Pius IX had already honored Saint Joseph by proclaiming him patron of the Universal Church and he had honored the Blessed Virgin by promulgating the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. "If the Holy Father would only do something for the Sacred Heart," she wrote to Padre Bianchi on August 11, 1873, "this act would be the crowning glory of everything else which he has done. . . . Oh, if the Holy Father would only consecrate the

whole Church to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as an extreme remedy for our most desolate and sad times. Such an act would be condemned, scoffed at, despised. But Jesus will triumph: the world will pass away, evil men will pass away, but good will remain, thanks to the Heart of Jesus. You see, dear Father, that I dare tell you what I am thinking. You will pardon me if I have said too much, but your goodness to me encourages me."

Less than two years later, on June 16, 1875, Pope Pius IX consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart. Before the consecration, Clotilde wrote to her girlhood friend Countess Angelica Calvi di Bergolo on June 7, 1875: "You will rejoice, my dear Angelica, over the beautiful feast of the consecration of the whole world to the Heart of Jesus, which will take place on the sixteenth. It is a great grace and a true consolation."

She also wrote two letters to the Pope, the first on May 10, the second on June 13, 1875. In the first she wrote:

Permit me, Most Holy Father, to tell you with filial simplicity how happy I am to hear of the forthcoming consecration of the world to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. You are blessed, Most Holy Father, in being the one whom the Lord is using to accomplish His work, the desire of His Most Sacred Heart. To your children remain the consolation and the obligation of supplicating the Heart of Jesus to repay Your Holiness with graces, enlightenment, strength, and benediction. . . .

Devotion to the Heart of Jesus was my favorite from my youth, a devotion from which I have received immense favors. And it will be with true joy that I shall see fulfilled on June 16 the most intimate desire of my heart.

In her second letter she repeated the same sentiments: "Many, many prayers to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

will rise for you, Most Holy Father, on June 16. . . . May this divine Heart pour upon Your August Person the choicest blessings and make the Church and us feel again God's benefices." Then in a postscript she added: "The principal intention which every day I offer to the Heart of Jesus in these days dedicated to Him is the triumph of the Holy Church and for the Pope."

To these letters Pope Pius IX answered in his own handwriting, one letter being dated May 26 and the other June 28. In both letters he thanked "my daughter in Jesus Christ," encouraging her not to fear in her heavy trials, saying, "The Heart of Jesus is a secure asylum in which we can all find comfort in the midst of the tempestuous waves which everywhere beat menacingly but which will never succeed in overthrowing the edifice raised by Jesus Christ." And the Pope ended by saying, "Let us love God, for God alone suffices, as Saint Teresa used to say. From my heart I bless you and your most dear children."

Clotilde attributed her ability to remain virtuous during her ten years in Paris to her devotion to the Sacred Heart. Six years after she left Paris, Clotilde wrote to Padre Bianchi:

I can say that the Lord worked a veritable miracle for me, guarding me and keeping me in good principles in a life which began when I was not yet sixteen years old. . . . Without a special help, believe me, Father, there was one chance out of a hundred that I would have been saved. It was impossible for a girl of my age and without any experience to escape without the Lord's help. The Heart of Jesus saved me, I am convinced. I had an immense devotion to Him and a trust in Him which only kept increasing.

Like her devotion to the Sacred Heart, Clotilde's devotion to the Blessed Virgin was lifelong. Like her devotion

to the Sacred Heart, her devotion to the Virgin received a special orientation during her visits to the Monastery des Oiseaux, for it was then that she developed within herself the mother-child relationship and joined the Union of the Children of Mary, which had been established at the monastery.

Clotilde's Marian devotion also had something of the expiatory element found in her devotion to the Sacred Heart. On Friday, June 20, 1879, during a procession honoring the Feast of the Virgin of Consolation in Turin, a group of ruffians standing on the sides tried to disrupt the devotion by hurling stones. When the Archbishop of Turin later invited the faithful to make reparation for the insults hurled at the Mother of God, Clotilde was among the first to enroll in the crusade of reparation. As a gift to the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Consolation she gave a silver heart in which was enclosed the following act of consecration and prayer to Mary, the Mother of God:

To you, the best of mothers, I entrust my children, Victor, Louis, and Maria Letizia; guard them as your own on earth so that they will also be yours and Jesus' in paradise.

I recommend to you Napoleon, Humbert, Amedeo, Maria Pia, Margherita, Louis [the King of Portugal] and their children, all the members of our families, as if I had mentioned each one by name.

I also recommend to you all those who have asked me to pray for them, all those who have been recommended to my prayers.

I ask of you all that I asked on the day of your feast, O Mary, my Mother: I ask for myself, the poorest and least of your children, an ever-increasing love for Jesus, fidelity to all my promises, and the favor to be always yours.

O Mary, pray for us and for our country. Obtain

mercy for all—for the world which is destroying itself, for poor sinners, and for the souls in purgatory.

On the following Friday, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1879, Clotilde, for the first time, made her vow of perfection, offering it to the Sacred Heart through the hands of Mary, His Mother.

Clotilde's devotion to the Blessed Virgin was integrally a part of her devotion to the Sacred Heart. She understood the desirability of going to Jesus through Mary, for Jesus came to us through her. Mary's privilege of her Immaculate Conception occupied much of Clotilde's contemplation, especially because it had recently been promulgated as a dogma of faith by Pope Pius IX.

Clotilde's devotion to the Blessed Mother had all the simplicity, affection, and order of her devotion to the Sacred Heart. And as in her devotion to the Sacred Heart, she did all she could to make others imitate her devotion to Mary, not only for themselves but also for other souls. In one of her writings Clotilde explained the threefold purpose of her own devotion to Mary:

To serve Mary:

She is a mother and you know how one serves a mother. By love, by practical confidence, by homage—nothing more than the natural impulse of a child toward its mother. Have a child's heart toward the one who has for us a mother's heart.

To be useful to Mary:

When you serve souls, you serve Mary. She does not need you for herself but she needs you for souls. She wants you to help her to save them by your prayers, by your sacrifices, etc.

To make use of Mary:

You must also use Mary as an intermediary. Among

all the means, devotion to Mary is first because it is the first which our Lord Himself used to save countless souls. You must have at heart this devotion as a really apostolic means. It is the devotion which enters hearts best and remains there the most. It is the devotion which preserves, which saves. Use all the energy at your command to make Mary known and loved.

In actual practice Clotilde's devotion to the Sacred Heart and to the Blessed Mother went hand in hand. The two devotions were parallel lines, not only going in the same direction but so close to each other that they formed only one wider line. Perhaps nowhere is this parallelism more evident than in the following act of consecration which she made in 1863:

Most sweet Jesus, Source of Love, Father of Mercy and God of all Consolation, O You who, in spite of our miseries and unworthiness, have deigned to unfold to us the ineffable riches of Your Heart, I, Maria Clotilde, in thanksgiving for the numberless benefits which You have bestowed on me and on others, in gratitude for the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and in reparation for the outrages which I and others have heaped upon Your most loving Heart in the mystery of Your boundless Charity, I consecrate myself to Your Most Sacred Heart. I consecrate all that belongs to me, all my goods, all the merits I have acquired or which I can acquire by Your grace, and I promise to propagate the devotion to Your divine Heart in so far as my weakness will allow me.

In addition I choose the Blessed Virgin Mary to be my mother in a very special manner. I consecrate and dedicate myself, with all that belongs to me, to her most pure heart; I promise to spread, with all my power and according to the mind of the Church, this devotion to this most holy Mother and, in particular,

devotion to her Immaculate Conception. I beg then, O my most sweet Jesus, through Your infinite kindness, that it please You to receive this holocaust; and as You have inspired me with the desire to offer it to You, grant me also an abundant grace to accomplish it. Amen.

The sixth day of December in the year 1863,
the second Sunday of Advent

It is true that there were no ecstasies, no visions, no prophecies in the spiritual life of Clotilde. But her union with God within the depths of her soul was as complete as ecstasy, as deep as vision, as luminous as prophecy. It was a union so close that while it admitted the infinite distinction between the finite creature and the infinite Creator, there was no separation. The oneness of her soul with God was analogous to the oneness of the image in the mirror with the mirror, the oneness of the sunlight with the sun, the oneness of the stream with its source.

Clotilde's personality had an organic unity and steadiness: it was all of one piece—there were no missing pieces, no left-over pieces which could later puzzle or mislead her biographers. Her spiritual character had the wholeness and vitality of a healthy plant whose growth was never blighted from seed to flower. Her life of grace was a tall candle which was lighted at her baptism, ten hours after her birth, and which kept burning steadily until her death.

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